A

NEW YEAR'S EVE,

And other Poems.

BY BERNARD BARTON

"THE HEART,
AND NOT THE HEAD, IS FOUNTAIN OF THIS ART!"
Francis Quarles.

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TO

CHARLES RICHARD SUMNER,

Bishop of Winchester,

IN MEMORIAL OF

HIS COURTESY AND KINDNESS,

THIS VOLUME

IS, WITH PERMISSION,

MOST RESPECTFULLY AND GRATEFULLY

INSCRIBED,

BY THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE Author of the following pages is well aware, from his own observation and experience, that a preface to a volume of poetry is very apt to be overlooked by most readers, and perused attentively by few. But it seems hardly accordant with his ideas of the respect which every writer owes to the public, to be entirely silent on such an occasion; and a still deeper feeling of gratitude for repeated indulgence, yet more strongly forbids it in his own case.

Perhaps the Author cannot more concisely express his feelings, in once more coming

before the public, than by simply transcribing the following Sonnet of a poet of the olden time,* as embodying all he could wish to offer on his own behalf.

TO THE RIGHT WORTHY AND JUDICIOUS
FAVOURER OF VERTUE,
MR. FULKE GREVILLE.

I do not here upon this humorous stage
Bring my transformed verse apparelled
With others' passions, or with others' rage;
With loves, with wounds, with factions furnished:
But here present thee, only modelled
In this poor frame, the form of mine own heart,
Where, to revive herself, my muse is led
With motions of her own to act her part;
Striving to make her own contemned art
As fair t' herself as possibly she can;
Lest seeming of no force, of no desert,
She might repent the course that she began:
And, with these times of dissolution, fall
From goodness, virtue, glory, fame, and all!

* Samuel Daniel, born in 1562; author of the "History of the Civil Wars;" "Musophilus," &c. &c.

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A NEW YEAR'S EVE.

A NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

I.

A New-year's Eve! Methinks 'tis good to sit
At such an hour, in silence and alone,
Tracing that record, by the pen unwrit,
Which every human heart has of its own,
Of joys and griefs, of hopes and fears unknown
To all beside; to let the spirit feel,
In all its force, the deep and solemn tone
Of Time's unflattering, eloquent appeal,
Which Truth to every breast would inwardly reveal.

II.

A New-year's Eve! Though all who live on earth,
Or rich, or poor, or vulgar, or refined,
Have each a day from whence they date their birth,
In their domestic chronicles enshrined—
To-morrow is a birth-day for mankind!
One of those epochs to which ALL refer
Their measure of existence; in each mind
Be hope or fear its mute interpreter,
Of pleasure or of pain the silent chronicler.

III.

It was no flight of fancy, then, in him,
Of proudest living bards the gifted peer,
Whose mental vision, purged from vapours dim,
Beheld "the skirts of the departing year!"
All who have eyes to see, or ears to hear,
Objects which every grosser sense defy,
Its parting footsteps catch with wakeful ear,
Its fading form behold with wistful eye,
'Till lost in that dark cloud which veils eternity.

IV.

Is this the preacher's cant? the poet's dream?
But few in silent solitude would dare,
Unless deceived by ignorance extreme,
As such to brand it. Age's silver hair,
Youth's blooming cheek, and manhood's brow of care,
What are they all but things that speak of time?
Nor lives there one, whatever form he wear,
Or rank he fill, who hears that midnight chime,
In whom it should not wake thoughts solemn and sublime.

V.

Nature herself seems, in her wintry dress,
To own the closing year's solemnity:
Spring's blooming flowers, and summer's leafiness,
And autumn's richer charms are all thrown by;
I look abroad upon a starless sky!
Even the plaintive breeze sounds like the surge
On ocean's shore among those pine trees high;
Or, sweeping o'er that dark wall's ivied verge,
It rings unto my thought the old year's mournful dirge.

VI.

Bear with me, gentle reader, if my vein
Appear too serious:—sober, but not sad
The thoughts and feelings which inspire my strain;
Could they with mirthful words be fitly clad?
The thoughtless call the melancholy mad,
And deem joy dwells where laughter lights the brow:
But are the gay indeed the truly glad,
Because they seem so? O, be wiser thou!
Winter which strips the vine, harms not the cypress' bough.

VII.

There is a joy in deep thought's pensive mood,
Far, far beyond the worldling's noisiest mirth;
It draws from purer elements its food,
Higher and holier is its heavenly birth:
It soars above the fleeting things of earth,
Through faith that elevates, and hope that cheers;
And estimates by their *enduring* worth,
The cares and trials, sorrows, toils, and fears,
Whose varied shadows pass across this vale of tears.

VIII.

Think not the sunny track, which lies thro' flowers,
The sweetest or the safest course may be,
Though Fancy there may build her fairy bowers,
And Pleasure's jocund train there wander free:
If heaven assign a thornier path to thee,
By clouds o'ershadow'd, start not at its gloom;
Wait patiently its onward course to see—
Those seeming thorns may bear unfading bloom,
And more than sun-set's light rest on the opening tomb.

IX.

E'en flowers are sweetest after summer's rain;
The sun shines brightest bursting from the cloud;
Pleasure is purest when it follows pain;
The moon smiles loveliest when, in beauty proud,
She breaks forth from her fleecy, silvery shroud;
Calm is the eve of many a stormy day;
The heart has joys it knows not in a crowd;
And those alone are happy, if not gay,
Who tread in patient hope life's smooth or rugged way.

X.

Then marvel not, at such an hour as this,
If, musing thus in silence and alone,
I feel a mournful, yet a soothing bliss,
In yielding up my spirit to the tone
Of sober thought and feeling round it thrown.
To render life a boon most justly dear,
Enough of sunlight on my path has shone;
More than enough of shadows dark and drear,
To bid in brightest moods my heart rejoice with fear.

XI.

If such be life, oh! who of its strange book
Shall turn, unmoved, a yet unopen'd page?
What eye with dull indifference coldly look
On what may be its changeful heritage?
The lone way-farer on his pilgrimage,
On each hill-top looks round with wistful eyes,
To see what warfare he must onward wage,
Or ponder well the lore the past supplies:
Are we not pilgrims all, whose home is in the skies?

XII.

And when we find another stage is won
On life's important journey, when we gain
An eminence whence we may look upon
The path already trodden, not in vain
Should we review its pleasure or its pain;
He who refuses to retrace *the past*,
Must meet *the future!* wherefore then refrain,
Because life's onward course seem overcast,
To look with steadfast eye on what may come at last?

XIII.

To me the yet untrodden road presents
More clouds than sunshine, less to hope than dread;
And yet among its unforeseen events,
Some there may be to lift in hope the head,
O'er which thick mists of darkness now are spread:
If e'en the little hoped may prove untrue,
Bringing but disappointment in its stead,
Fear's dark forebodings may deceive the view,
And life's declining hours may wear a happier hue.

XIV.

That he who lives the longest may out-live
  Much that gave life its highest, purest zest,
Is true, though mournful; one by one we give,
  In childhood, youth, or age, to earth's cold breast,
The friends we've loved the fondest and the best:—
  The very bells that now "ring out the year,"
Since morn arose, this painful truth imprest;
  And sadly those who loved Thee paused to hear
Thy slow and solemn knell fall on the startled ear.

XV.

But can we mourn thee, gentlest friend, with grief
  That knows no soothing hope? Oh! name it not;
All that can yield to anguish sweet relief,
  Brightens the tear that mourns thy early lot;
A blameless life with no dark shade to blot
  Its tranquil splendour, save its early end,
Was thine; unmourned, unhonoured, or forgot,
  Thou didst not to the silent grave descend;
What most embalms the dead must with thy memory blend.

XVI.

In one bereaved, in many a pensive heart,
  Thy loved remembrance not e'en death can chill;
Strengthening that humble faith whose only chart
  Is meek submission to the Almighty's will:
For "tribulation worketh patience" still,
  "Patience experience, and experience hope!"
And thus is power afforded to fulfil
  Each duty, 'till the thorns with which we cope
Burst forth in grateful flowers, and resignation slope

XVII.

Our passage to the tomb! Grief is a sad
  Yet salutary teacher; not so stern
As many deem, although his brow be clad
  With the cold flowers that wreathe the funeral urn!
And wise are they who stoop of him to learn;
  If these are taught wherein their weakness lies,
Not less are they instructed to discern,
  And praise HIS goodness who their strength supplies,
'Till "crosses from His hand are blessings in disguise!"

XVIII.

When He, the pure and sinless One, came down
To sinful earth, our load of guilt to bear,
And teach us how to win a heavenly crown
By patient suffering, 'twas not His to wear
Joy's smiling mien or mirth's enlivening air;
By human folly, human crime untainted,
Of human woes he bore his ample share,
And in his mortal aspect still is painted
A man of sorrows deep, with darkest grief acquainted.

XIX.

Rare at the banquet board, but often found
Where want, disease, and sorrow heaved their groan;
Whether he trod Gethsemane's sad ground,
Or on the Mount of Olives prayed alone,
For us was grief's dark vesture round him thrown;
Why? but to teach us how to kiss the rod,
And, "perfected through suffering," to make known
That sorrow's thorny path, if meekly trod,
Must guide his followers still to glory and to God.

XX.

Here then we reach the panacea, sought
In vain of old by proud philosophy,
Whereby e'en seeming ill with good is fraught,
And grateful tears gush from the mourner's eye;
For holy faith's all potent alchymy
Can do far more than language can express:
Beauty for ashes it can still supply,
Give joy for mourning, and the spirit dress
In the glad garb of praise for that of heaviness.

XXI.

Has not the Christian cause then to exclaim,
Beyond the Greek philosopher of yore,
" EUREKA !" Shall a heathen's transports shame
The meek disciple of a holier lore?
Thanks be to God, and praise for evermore!
There are whose spirits have been humbly taught
For darkest days his goodness to adore,
And own the mercy which has safely brought
Their feet thro' rugged paths with thorns of anguish fraught.

XXII.

For these have found, e'en in the seven-fold heat
Of trial's fiery furnace, that His power
Can make the bitterest cup seem truly sweet,
And cheer with hope when clouds most seemed to lower:
His holy name hath been their fortress tower;
And faith in his dear Son who reigns above,
Has made them in temptation's fearful hour,
Wise as the serpent, harmless as the dove,
And more than conquerors still thro' their Redeemer's love!

XXIII.

No more of sorrow. Think not I would fling
O'er brighter hearts than mine a sadd'ning shade,
Or have them, by the sober truths I sing,
Be causelessly dejected or dismayed.
My task has been to show how heavenly aid
May lighten earthly grief; how flowers may cheer
Even pale Sorrow's seeming thorny braid;
And how, amid December's tempests drear,
Some solemn thoughts are due unto the parting year.

XXIV.

My brighter task remains. " A New-year's Eve !
'Tis not an hour to sink in cheerless gloom,
To take of every hope a mournful leave,
As if the earth were but a yawning tomb,
And sighs and tears mortality's sole doom;
The Christian knows " to enjoy is to obey ;"
All he *most* hopes or fears is in the womb
Of vast eternity, and there alway
His thoughts and feelings tend; yet in his transient stay

XXV.

On this fair earth, he truly can enjoy,
And he alone, its transitory good;
The bliss of worldlings soon or late must cloy,
For sensual is its element and food;
The Christian's is of higher, nobler mood,
It brings no riot, leaves no dark unrest,
Its source is seen, its end is understood,
Its light is that calm " sunshine of the breast,"
Sanctioned by Reason's law, and by Religion blest.

XXVI.

To him the season, though it may recall
  Solemn and touching thoughts, has yet a ray
Of brightness o'er it thrown, which sheds on all
  His fellow-pilgrims in life's rugged way,
Far more than sunshine; and his *heart* is gay!
  Were all like his, how beautiful were mirth!
Then human feelings might keep holiday
  In blameless joy, beside the social hearth,
And honour Heaven's first law by happiness on earth.

XXVII.

Is not the hour just past when midnight laud
  Sang peace on earth, proclaim'd good-will to man?
And would not e'en the coldest hearts be thawed,
  Melted to feeling, did they rightly scan
Redemption's merciful and gracious plan?
  Oh! who the memory of that hour shall scorn,
Unless indeed misanthropy's dark ban
  Hath made the heart of every hope forlorn,
When the glad shepherds heard the glorious Child was born?

XXVIII.

Then heap the blazing hearth, and spread the board,
Enlarge the circle, open wide the door,
Ye who are rich; and from your ample hoard
Clothe ye the naked, feed the hungry poor;
Impart to those who mourn their scanty store:
The measure that ye mete shall be your own;
Full measure, heaped, and pressed, and running o'er,
May here on earth requite the kindness shown,
And Heaven a richer boon hereafter shall make known.

XXIX.

Confine not to your equals, friends, or kin,
The charities this wintry hour demands;
'Tis wise to cherish, good to gather in,
As to the heart's own garner, all that stands
Linked to us by our nature's strongest bands;
To greet the present, and to think of those,
As fondly loved, who roam in foreign lands,
In whose warm hearts perchance at distance glows
That yearning love of home the exile only knows.

XXX.

All this is wise and good, and tends to keep
Nature's best feelings actively alive;
To cherish sympathies which else might sleep
The sleep of death, and never more revive;
But not for these alone so hoard and hive
What Heaven has given you, as to limit there
Your hospitable rites; but rather strive
To let the wretched in your bounty share,
Remembering these were once your Lord's peculiar care.

XXXI.

Give unto those who cannot give again,
Who have no claim upon you but distress;
Imagine not the boon bestowed in vain,
The blessing of the poor your wealth may bless,
And their prayers prove you worthy to possess
Your earthly substance:—e'en what you partake
Shall be enjoyed with truer happiness
For every grateful feeling you awake;—
Since God hath given to you, give others for His sake.

XXXII.

But banish from your hour of festive joy
The revel's rude excess, the jest obscene;—
The orgies of the wicked ever cloy,
And harpy feasts, unholy and unclean,
But ill befit a Christian's sober mien:
His mirth is cheerfulness that leaves no sting;
Nor would he change the happiness serene
Of hours that bear no stain upon their wing,
For all the boisterous joys which prouder banquets bring.

XXXIII.

He who of such delights can judge, yet spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.
Thus Milton sang; the warbled Tuscan air,
The neat repast and light, his taste implies:—
Pure and refined that taste in Reason's eyes,
And worthy of Religion's high applause,
Which taught our noble poet how to prize
"The mirth that after no repenting draws,"
But can God's gifts enjoy, yet keep His holy laws.

XXXIV.

A New-year's Eve! My fancy, wing thy flight,
Nor doubt that in thy native country dear,
There are who honour with appropriate rite
The closing hours of the departing year;
Who mingle with their hospitable cheer
Feelings and thoughts to man in mercy given,
Brightening in Sorrow's eye the pensive tear,
And healing hearts by disappointment riven,
Their's who o'er rougher seas have tempest-tost been driven.

XXXV.

And these are they who on this social eve
Its old observances with joy fulfil;
Their simple hearts the loss of such would grieve,
For childhood's early memory keeps them still,
Like lovely wild-flowers by a chrystal rill,
Fresh and unfading; they may be antique,
In towns disused; but rural vale and hill,
And those who live and die there, love to seek
The blameless bliss they yield, for unto them they speak

XXXVI.

A language dear as the remembered tone
Of murmuring streamlet in his native land
Is to the wanderer's ear, who treads alone
O'er India's or Arabia's wastes of sand:
Their memory too is mixed with pleasures plann'd
In the bright happy hours of blooming youth;
When Fancy scattered flowers with open hand
Across Hope's path, whose visions passed for sooth,
Yet linger in such hearts their ancient worth and truth.

XXXVII.

And therefore do they deck their walls with green;
There shines the holly-bough with berries red;
There too the yule-log's cheerful blaze is seen
Around its genial warmth and light to shed;
Round it are happy faces, smiles that spread
A feeling of enjoyment calm and pure,
A sense of happiness, home-born, home-bred,
Whose influence shall unchangeably endure
While *home* for English hearts has pleasures to allure.

XXXVIII.

And far remote be the degenerate day
Which dooms *our* thoughts in quest of joy to roam!
From the thatched, white-washed cot, tho' built of clay,
To Wealth's most costly, Grandeur's proudest dome,
A Briton's breast should love and prize his home:
Changeful our clime, and round our spot of earth,
Roused by the wintry winds, the white waves foam;
But here all household ties have had their birth,
And sires and sons been found to feel and own their worth.

XXXIX.

Here the Penates have been worshipped long,
Not merely by the wood-fire blazing bright
By childhood's pastime, and by poet's song,
Though these have gladdened many a winter night,
And made their longest, darkest hours seem light;
But their's has been the homage of the heart,
That far surpasses each external rite,
In which more quiet feelings have their part—
Smiles that uncalled for come, tears that unbidden start.

XL.

And though the world more worldly may have grown,
And modes and manners to our fathers dear
Be now by most unpractised and unknown,
Not less their *spirit* we may still revere;
Honoured the smile, and hallowed be the tear,
Given to these reliques of the olden time,
For those there be that prize them; as the ear
May love the ancient poet's simple rhyme,
Or feel the secret charm of minster's distant chime.

XLI.

Thus it should be! their memory is entwined
With things long buried in Time's whelming wave;
Objects the heart has ever fondly shrined,
And fain from dull forgetfulness would save;
The wise, the good, the gentle and the brave,
Whose names o'er History's page have glory shed;
The patriot's birth-place, and the poet's grave,
Old manners and old customs, long since fled,
Yet to the living dear, linked with the honoured dead!

XLII.

Once more, "A New-year's Eve!" My strain began
With sober thoughts, with such it well may end;
For when, oh! when, should these come home to man,
With such a season if they may not blend?
My gentle reader, let an unknown friend
Remind thee of the ceaseless lapse of time!
Nor will his serious tone thy ear offend
If love may plead his pardon for the crime
Of blending solemn truth with minstrel's simple rhyme.

XLIII.

"I would not trifle merely, though the world
Be loudest in their praise who do no more;"
A standard is uplifted and unfurl'd;
The summons hath gone forth from shore to shore;
In thought's still pause, in passion's loud uproar,
Thine ear has heard that gentle voice serene,
Deep, but not loud, behind thee and before;
Thine inward eye that banner too hath seen;—
Hast thou obeyed the call? or still a loiterer been?

XLIV.

Canst thou forget who first on Calv'ry's height
Lifted that glorious banner up on high,
While heaven above was wrapped in starless night,
And earth, convulsed with horror, heard the cry,
ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACTHANI?
Look back upon that hour of grief and pain;
For THEE He came to suffer, and to die!
The blood He shed must be thy boon, or bane,
Let conscience answer which! HE hath not died in vain.

XLV.

Christ died for ALL. But in that general debt
He bled to cancel—dost not thou partake?
Is *thine*, too, blotted out? Oh! do not set
Upon a doubtful issue such a stake!
Each faculty of soul and sense awake;
Trust not a *general* truth which may be vain
To thee; but rather, for thy Saviour's sake,
And for thy own, some evidence attain
For thee indeed he died, for thee hath risen again.

XLVI.

Are thy locks white with many long-past years?
One more is dawning which thy last may be;
Art thou in middle age, by worldly fears
And hopes surrounded? set thy spirit free,
More awful fears, more glorious hopes to see.
Art thou in blooming youth? thyself engage
To serve and honour HIM, who unto thee
Would be a guide and guard through life's first stage,
Wisdom in manhood's strength, and greenness in old age!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

A WINTER THOUGHT.

DEAR friend! long tried and faithful proved
In hours of grief and gloom;
In such more justly prized and loved,
Than in joy's brightest bloom;—

Well may that cheerless winter sky,
That one bright star above,
Recall thy worth and constancy
To gratitude and love.

The steersman, in a summer night,
When cloudless are the skies,
May gaze upon their orbs of light,
Till slumber seal his eyes;

But when the winds are loud and stern,
And Heaven is drear and dark,
To one alone his glance will turn,
By that he guides his bark!

So clouds have veiled each star and sun,
Once wont my sky to cheer;
And thou art now the polar one,
By which my course I steer.

The blossoms of life's spring-tide gay,
My path have long since fled,
My summer foliage passed away,
My autumn fruit been shed.

But thou in winter's storms art yet
  Unchanged in faith to me;
And dear though hopeless seems the debt
  I long have owed to thee.

VERSES,

WRITTEN DURING THE ALARMING ILLNESS OF A HIGHLY VALUED FRIEND.

'Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?"

Thus speaks Thy holy word!
Yet in our passage through this vale of tears,
Our inmost hearts are stirred
By human passions, human hopes and fears.

Nor does thy law reprove,
Or interdict each gentler human tie;
Pure friendship, virtuous love,
Are objects of thy tender sympathy.

Our Saviour, when on earth,
Honoured at Cana's feast the bridal hour;
Of Friendship's noblest worth,
By Lazarus's grave confest the power.

And still his heavenly grace
Allows Affection's fond and anxious sigh:
It only points the place
Which Thou in every heart shouldst occupy.

Then teach us in His name,
Meekly to yield to Thine our wish and will,
To own Thy sov'reign claim,
Of life, of death, all-wise disposer still.

Yet, in this fearful hour
Of doubt and grief, hear Thou the fervent prayer
Of hearts that trust thy power,
And on thy mercy cast their every care.

If it seem right to Thee,
Give joy for mourning, turn their prayers to praise;
And grant that they may see
Him whom they love, preserved to lengthened days.

But whatsoe'er his lot,
Or ours,—to both, through thy beloved Son,
Give faith that murmurs not,
And strength to say—"Thy holy will be done!"

ROBERT BRUCE AND THE SPIDER

NOT in Prosperity's broad light
  Can Reason justly scan
The sterling worth which, viewed aright,
  Most dignifies the man;
Favoured at once by wind and tide,
A skill-less pilot well may guide
  The bark in safety on;
Yet, when his harbour he has gained,
He who no conflict hath sustained,
  No meed has fairly won.

But in Adversity's dark hour
 Of peril and of fear,
When clouds above the vessel lower,
 With scarce one star to cheer;
When winds are loud, and waves are high,
And ocean to a timid eye
 Appears the seaman's grave;
Amid the conflict calm, unmoved,
By Truth's unerring test is proved
 The skilful and the brave.

For Scotland's and for Freedom's right
 The Bruce his part had played:
In five successive fields of fight
 Been conquered, not dismayed;
Once more against the English host
His band he led, and once more lost
 The meed for which he fought;
And now, from battle faint and worn,
The homeless fugitive forlorn
 A hut's lone shelter sought.

And cheerless was that resting place
For him who claimed a throne;
His canopy, devoid of grace,
The rude, rough beams alone;
The heather couch his only bed,—
Yet well I ween had slumber fled
From couch of eider down;
Through darksome night to dawn of day,
Immersed in wakeful thought he lay
Of Scotland and her crown.

The sun rose brightly, and its gleam
Fell on that sleepless bed,
And tinged with light each shapeless beam
Which roofed the lowly shed;
When looking up with wistful eye,
The Bruce beheld a spider try
His filmy thread to fling
From beam to beam of that rude cot;
And well the insect's toilsome lot
Taught Scotland's future king.

Six times his gossamery thread
  The wary spider threw:
In vain the filmy line was sped;
  For powerless, or untrue
Each aim appeared, and back recoiled
The patient insect, six times foiled,
  And yet unconquered still;
And soon the Bruce, with eager eye,
Saw him prepare once more to try
  His courage, strength, and skill.

One effort more, its seventh, and last!
  The hero hailed the sign!
And on the wished-for beam hung fast
  That slender, silky line;
Slight as it was, his spirit caught
The more than omen, for his thought
  The lesson well could trace,
Which even "he who runs may read,"
That Perseverance gains its meed,
  And Patience wins the race.

Is it a tale of mere romance?
  Its moral is the same;
A light and trivial circumstance?
  Some thought it still may claim.
Art thou a father? teach thy son
Never to deem that all is done,
  While aught remains untried;
To hope, though every hope seem crost;
And when his bark is tempest-tost,
  Still calmly to confide.

Hast thou been long and often foiled
  By adverse winds and seas,
And vainly struggled, vainly toiled,
  For what some win with ease?
Yet bear up heart and hope and will,
Nobly resolved to struggle still,
  With patience persevere;
Knowing when darkest seems the night
The dawning of morn's glorious light
  Is swiftly drawing near.

Art thou a Christian? shall the frown
  Of fortune cause dismay?—
The Bruce but won an earthly crown,
  Which long hath pass'd away;
For thee a heavenly crown awaits,
For thee are oped the pearly gates,
  Prepared the deathless palm;—
But bear in mind, that only those
Who persevere unto the close,
  Can join in Victory's psalm.

SONNET

TO WILLIAM AND MARY HOWITT.

THE breath of Spring is stirring in the wood,
Whose budding boughs confess the genial gale;
And thrush and blackbird tell their tender tale;
The hawthorn tree, that leafless long has stood,
Shows signs of blossoming; the streamlet's flood
Hath shrunk into its banks, and in each vale
The lowly violet, and the primrose pale,
Have lured the bee to seek his wonted food.
Then up! and to your forest haunts repair,
Where Robin Hood once held his revels gay;
Yours is the greensward smooth, and vocal spray;
And I, as on your pilgrimage ye fare,
In all your sylvan luxuries shall share
When I peruse them in your minstrel lay.

SONNET

TO THE SAME.

Winter hath bound the brooks in icy chains;
The bee that murmured in the cowslip bell
Now feasts securely in his honied cell;
Silence is on the woods and on the plains,
And darkening clouds and desolating rains
Have marred your forest fountain's quiet spell;
Yet, though retired from these awhile ye dwell,
Your hearts' best hoard of poesy remains.
The sports of childhood, the exhaustless store
Of home-born thoughts and feelings dear to each,
Converse, or silence eloquent as speech;
History's rich page, tradition's richer lore,
Of tale and legend prized in days of yore;—
These, worthy of the Muse, are in your reach.

THE NORTH COUNTRIE.

"But he, I ween, was of the North Countrie."
Beattie's Minstrel.

THE North Countrie! the North Countrie!
Who hath not heard its fame?
From shore to shore, from sea to sea,
It bears an honoured name.
Legend, and tale, and minstrelsy,
And painter's magic hand,
Have made it seem to heart and eye
A loved and lovely land.

The North Countrie! the North Countrie!
There mighty mountains rise,
And many a sweetly sheltered lea
In gentler beauty vies;

There gleams the lake,—and in its pride
Is heard the torrent's flood,
Whose grey rocks frowning by its side
As guardians long have stood.

The North Countrie! the North Countrie!
Full many a ruined tower
Is there, like trunk of scathed tree,
Stripped of its pride and power;
Yet lovely to the musing eye
Each battlemented hold,
Telling a tale of deeds gone by,
And feudal days of old.

The North Countrie! the North Countrie!
There spectral visions dwell,
And Superstition holds the key
Of Fancy's wizard cell;
There Wraith and Brownie linger still,
For beldame or for bairn,
On barren moor, on lofty hill,
Beside the chieftain's cairn.

The North Countrie! the North Countrie!
There Knowledge sheds her light,
And soon before its beams must flee
The shades of Error's night.
Yet long the memory of the past,
O'er glen and cavern drear
A dim and shadowy spell shall cast,
To wayward Fancy dear.

Thou bonnie North! thou bonnie North!
If southron hearts can feel
Of all thy blended charms the worth,
And own their fond appeal,
How must thy children love each grace
That crowns their "ain countrie!"
And well may poet proudly trace
His kith and kin to thee.

A CHILD'S EVENING HYMN.

Before I close my eyes in sleep,
Lord, hear my evening prayer;
And deign a helpless one to keep
By thy protecting care.

Though young in years, I have been taught
Thy Name to love and fear,
Of Thee to think with solemn thought,
Thy goodness to revere.

That goodness gives each simple flower
  Its scent and beauty too,
And feeds it in night's darkest hour
  With heaven's refreshing dew.

Nor will Thy mercy less delight
  The infant's God to be,
Who through the long and sleepless night,
  For safety trusts to thee.

The little birds that sing all day
  In many a leafy wood,
By Thee are clothed in plumage gay,
  By Thee supplied with food.

And when at night they cease to sing,
  By Thee protected still,
Their young ones sleep beneath their wing,
  Secure from every ill.

Thus mayst Thou guard with gracious arm
  The couch whereon I lie,
And keep a child from every harm
  By Thy all-watchful eye.

For night and day to Thee are one,
  The helpless are Thy care;
And for the sake of Thy dear Son,
  Thou hear'st an infant's prayer.

A CHILD'S MORNING HYMN.

Once more the light of day I see;
Lord, with it let me raise
My heart and voice in song to Thee
Of gratitude and praise.

The "busy bee" ere this hath gone
O'er many a bud and bell:
From flower to flower is humming on,
To store its waxen cell.

O may I like the bee still strive
Each moment to employ,
And store my mind, that richer hive,
With sweets that cannot cloy.

The skylark from its lowly nest
Hath soared into the sky,
And by its joyous song expressed
Unconscious praise on high.

My feeble voice and faltering tone
No tuneful tribute brings;
But Thou canst in my heart make known
What bird can never sing.

Instruct me, then, to lift my heart
To Thee in praise and prayer;
And love and gratitude impart
For every good I share.

For all the gifts thy bounty sends,
For which so many pine,
For food and clothing, home and friends,
Since all these boons are thine.

Thus let me, Lord, confess the debt
I owe thee day by day;
Nor e'er at night or morn forget
To Thee, O God, to pray!

POWER AND GENTLENESS;

OR,

THE CATARACT AND THE STREAMLET.

Noble the mountain stream,
Bursting in grandeur from its vantage-ground;
Glory is in its gleam
Of brightness,—thunder in its deafening sound.

Mark how its foamy spray,
Tinged by the sunbeams with reflected dyes,
Mimics the bow of day,
Arching in dignity the vaulted skies.

Thence, in a summer shower,
Steeping the rocks around! Oh! tell me, where
Could Majesty and Power
Be clothed in forms more beautifully fair?

Yet lovelier in my view
The streamlet flowing silently serene;
Traced by the brighter hue,
And livelier growth it gives,—itself unseen.

It flows through flowery meads,
Gladdening the herds which on its margin browse;
Its quiet bounty feeds
The alders that o'ershade it with their boughs.

Gently it murmurs by
The village church-yard; its low, plaintive tone
A dirge-like melody
For worth and beauty modest as its own.

More gaily now it sweeps
By the small school-house, in the sunshine bright;
And o'er the pebbles leaps,
Like happy hearts by holiday made light.

May not its course express,
In characters which they who run may read,
The charm of GENTLENESS,
Were but its still small voice allowed to plead?

What are the trophies gained
By POWER alone, with all its noise and strife,
To that meek wreath unstained,
Won by the charities that gladden life?

NIAGARA's streams might fail,
And human happiness be undisturbed;—
But Egypt would turn pale
Were her still NILE's o'erflowing bounty curbed!

HEATH SCENERY.

I LOVE the wild and ferny heath,
  Though dreary deemed and bare ;
I love to feel heaven's balmy breath,
  A truant wanderer there.

As sweetly there the wild-flower grows,
  And drinks the pearly dew,
As in the garden blooms the rose,
  Of richer, prouder hue.

As blythely from its broomy nest
  The skylark soars on high,
As from the spots which man has drest
  With patient industry.

Nor has my heart by Music's power
  Been softened and subdued,
As on the heath, at night's still hour,
  By quiet solitude!

In morn's young brightness,—noon's repose,
  At vesper-hour serene,
Or when the moonlight softly throws
  Its splendour o'er the scene,

I find some wild and simple grace,
  Beyond the reach of art,
Which silent thought delights to trace,
  And cherish in the heart.

VENICE.

SUGGESTED BY A VIEW OF THE RIALTO, &c.

YES! thou art glorious still;
And here the artist's skill
Hath made thee seem so, even in decay;
What must thy noon have been,
When now thou look'st a queen
In the last lingering twilight of thy day?

Boldly Rialto's arch
Still spans the sleepy march
Of what was once thy traffic-crowded tide
And gorgeous to the sight
The proudly-towering height
Of princely palaces on either side!

How noble was thy state,
When, yet inviolate,
"Thou wert a maiden city, bold and free;"
Which, when she deigned to wed,
Uncrowned not her head
To monarchs—but espoused the glorious Sea!

Such in thy pride wert thou!
Alas! how altered now!—
Thy commerce, wealth and power alike are fled:
Of fame, of freedom reft,
Thy lingering splendours left
Seem but a mockery of the silent dead.

Yet with thy memory twined
Are names by thought enshrined,
Names justly dear to Nature and to Art;
Whose power intuitive
Shall cause thee long to live
In the fond day-dreams of each thrilling heart.

In Otway's tragic fame,
In Shakspeare's mightier name,
In Canaletto's tints, thy glories shine;
And in our later day,
Byron's undying lay
Has linked thy honours with the deathless Nine.

Then wherefore mourn the fall
Of Doge or Carnival?
Or charge the ravages of Time with wrong?
Though abject be thy lot,
Thou ne'er canst be forgot,
Admired in painting, and beloved in song!

COUNSELS.

THOUGH bright thy morn of life may seem,
Remember clouds may rise;
And trust not to the transient gleam
Of calm and sunny skies.
So tread life's path, in sunshine drest,
With lowly, cautious fear,
That when grief's shadows o'er it rest,
Joy's memory may be dear.

If dark life's matin hours may be,
Despond not at their gloom:
Joy's cloudless sun may rise for thee,
And Hope's bright flowerets bloom;

So trace thy path-way, thorn-bestrewed,
  That thou, in happier hours,
With pure and pangless gratitude,
  Mayst bless its fragrant flowers.

Through cloud and sunshine, flower and thorn,
  Pursue thy even way,
Nor let thy better hopes be born
  Of things that must decay.
Rejoice with trembling, mourn with hope,
  Take life as life is given:
Its rough ascent, its flowery slope,
  May lead alike to Heaven!

I saw a ruin, mossed and grey,
   A desolate and time-worn pile:
With ivy-wreaths and wall-flowers gay,
   In morning's cloudless sunbeams smile.

I saw a dark and gloomy cloud:
   It drifted towards the glowing west;
Tinged by the setting sunshine proud,
   It seemed in more than beauty drest.

I could but think to age were given
   Charms which might lapse of years defy;
To darkest sorrow light from Heaven,
   And Hope of immortality.

THE PAST.

O for the days of olden time!
With magic marvels rife,
When visions, shadowy and sublime,
Their influence shed o'er life.

When ivied grot and darksome dell,
Wild heath and mountain hoar,
Were haunted by the potent spell
Of legendary lore.

When fairies danced on moon-lit green,
And fauns in shady wood;
And by each fountain's silvery sheen
Its guardian naiad stood.

Such were the wild and wondrous themes
  Which gave, in earlier days,
The minstrel's visionary dreams,
  And woke his favourite lays.

But spell and vision, elf and faun,
  And naiad, loved of yore,
In vale, on hill, in grove, on lawn,
  By fount—are known no more.

Far from the worldling's frigid jest
  Hath fled the frolic train,
And proud Philosophy's behest
  Unpeopled wood and plain.

May not the poet mourn for this,
  And own with fruitless sighs,
Where simple "ignórance was bliss,
  'Tis folly to be wise?"

THE PRESENT.

BARD of the green-wood lyre!
How shalt thou hope, in these enlightened days,
For themes which may inspire,
Or readers who may love thy simple lays?

Science, with vaunted skill,
Philosophy, with cold and proud pretence,
Fashion's capricious will,
And sordid Mammon plead the joys of sense.

The palpable and real
Must now supplant the beautiful and wild;
The lovely and ideal
Be deemed the nursery fables of a child.

Go, sing the charms of Wealth,
The praise of Commerce, glory of the Arts;
But breathe not, e'en by stealth,
One rustic legend dear to simple hearts.

Or turn from Mammon's gold,
The pomp of Science, or the pride of Power,
To win the plaudits cold
Which Fashion gives her minion of an hour.

But hymn not to the throng
Of heartless worldlings thy derided strain;
Pluto heard Orpheus' song,
The world's true denizens would thine disdain.

THE FUTURE.

But is the poet thus bereft?
Hath song no glorious visions left,
More holy, heavenly, and sublime,
Than legends of the olden time?

Because the world and worldly cares
Cumber life's daily path with snares,
Hath Science, Commerce, Wealth or Power,
Destroyed the minstrel's loftiest dower?

Believe it not! The immortal soul
Still travels onward to its goal;
Its holiest hopes, its visions high,
Are linked to dim Futurity.

In viewless ages yet to come,
It seeks its everlasting home,
And, conscious of its heavenly birth,
It spurns the bounds of time and earth.

Then, poet, mourn *The Past* no more,
And cease *The Present* to deplore;
With humbled heart and heavenward eye,
Look forward to ETERNITY!

Beyond thy mortal vision's scope
Exists the "*Promised Land*" of HOPE;
And through the shadowy vale of Death
Extends the vista seen by FAITH.

LADY RACHEL RUSSELL;

OR, A ROMAN HERO AND AN ENGLISH HEROINE COMPARED.

In the proud Forum's central space
Earth yawned—a gulf profound!
And there, with awe on every face,
Rome's bravest gathered round:
Each seeming yet, with startled ear,
The Oracle's dread voice to hear.

Young Curtius on his war-horse sprung,
'Mid plaudits deep, not loud,
For admiration checked each tongue
In all the circling crowd;—
He gave his noble steed the rein,
Earth's closing gulf entombed the twain!

Grant that the feat, if ever done,
  Was chivalrous and bold,
A loftier and a nobler one
  Our history can unfold;
Nor shall our heroine, meekly calm,
To Rome's proud hero yield the palm.

The Russell stood beside her lord
  When evil tongues were rife,
And Perjury, with voice abhorred,
  Assailed his fame and life;
She stood there in the darkest hour
Of Tyranny's and Faction's power.

No stern oracular behest
  Her gentle courage gave,
No plaudits, uttered or suppress,
  Could she expect or crave;
Duty alone her Delphic shrine,
The only praise she sought—DIVINE!

She sate at Guilt's tribunal bar
In Virtue's noblest guise,
As beams some brightly shining star
In night's o'erclouded skies;
Still, in that scene of hopeless strife,
Southampton's daughter! Russell's wife!

Fearless in love, in goodness great,
She rose her lord to aid;
And well might he intrust his fate
To one so undismayed;
Asking with fond and grateful pride
No help but that her love supplied.

Her's was no *briefly daring mood,*
Spent on one fearful deed!
The gentle courage of the good
More lasting worth can plead;
And her's made bright in after years
The mother's toils, the widow's tears.

Woman of meek, yet fearless soul,
  Thy memory aye shall live;
Nor soon shall history's varied scroll
  A name more glorious give:—
What English heart but feels its claim
Far, far beyond the Roman's fame?

A SPRING DIRGE.

The songster on the bough,
Spring's tender greenness, and its opening flower,
Were joyous once !—but now
My spirit faintly seems to feel their power.

My heart with answering glee
Was wont to hail " the merry month of May,"
And, like the sapling tree,
To bud and blossom in its genial ray.

Now it seems cold and drear,
While birds are singing round, and flowrets blow ;
As rugged, mossed, and sere,
Stands the scathed trunk whose sap forgets to flow.

Round such Time does but fling
Its ivy-wreath of sorrows and of cares;
Closer the tendrils cling
As less and less of life within it bears.

All is not dead beneath,
For life still lingers in the root below;
But the dark ivy-wreath
Lends it the only greenness it can show.

And 'tis a mournful thought,
To think the verdure of our lingering day
Is but with ruin fraught,
The pledge and prelude of its sure decay.

WILLIAM COWPER.

VERSES WRITTEN IN THE FIRST LEAF OF A SMALL VOLUME, ENTITLED, "COWPER'S RURAL WALKS."

'Tis not the graver's power to please
That here attracts the eye,
For prouder works of Art than these
Are passed regardless by.

Nor here magnificently grand
Are Nature's beauties seen;
On Ouse's bank her bounteous hand
Bestows a softer mien.

Why, then, are these tame landscapes fraught
With charms whose meek appeal
To sensibility and thought,
My heart is prone to feel?

Cowper! thy muse's magic skill
Hath made them classic ground:
Thy gentle memory haunts them still,
And casts its spell around.

The hoary oak, the peasant's nest,
The rustic bridge, the grove,
The turf thy feet so oft have prest,
The temple and alcove;

The shrubbery, moss-house, simple urn,
The elms, the lodge, the hall;—
Each is thy witness in its turn,
Thy verse the charm of all!

Thy verse—not less to Nature true
  Than to Religion dear—
O'er every object sheds a hue
  That long must linger here.

Amid these scenes those hours were spent
  Of which we reap the fruit;
And each is now thy monument,
  Since that sweet lyre is mute.

" Here, like the nightingale's," were poured
  " Thy solitary lays,"
Which sought the glory of the Lord,
  " Nor asked for human praise."

Here, beneath clouds of darkest gloom,
  Thy cup of woe was drained;
And here, immortally to bloom,
  Thy stainless wreath was gained:

Not given thee by the fabled Nine,
But Virtue's just reward,
And such as angels might entwine
To crown a Christian bard !

SONNET.

I wish, my friend, that I *could* fancy this
The brightest age the world has ever known;
Alas! too much to selfish splendour prone,
Joy's smile seems faint; and heartless Pleasure's kiss
Contrasted with the quiet, sober bliss
That English hearts were wont to call their own;
Nor can its tinsel gaieties atone
For all the sterling worth that now we miss.
I rather deem it one of proud pretence,
Of splendid means to gain a sordid end:
Nor can I but be sick at heart, dear friend,
To see, while Nature woos our every sense,
How few there are who own her influence,
And in their hearts her simple charms commend.

JOHN WILLIAM FLETCHER,

OF MADELY.

WRITTEN AFTER READING HIS LIFE.

Departed saint! as here I trace
  Thy pure, devoted love,
Thy growth in every Christian grace,
  Imparted from above;

Thy deep humility, thy faith,
  Thy charity, thy zeal,
Thy active life, thy peaceful death,—
  These to my heart appeal.

Delight and shame at once they wake,
With low, yet pleading tone;
The first excited for thy sake,
The latter for my own.

I can but see how brightly clear
Thy lamp was wont to shine:
I can but think with grief and fear,
How dim and faint is mine.

Yet the same Lord for both has died,
For both has risen again;
The light which was thy guard and guide,
Would make my pathway plain.

Oh! for faith, hope, and love like thine,
That I might follow thee;—
Saviour! thy power is still divine,
Display that power for me!

THE NIGHTINGALE FLOWER.

"There is an evening flower of the Cape, which, in its natural state, remains in its calyx all the day invisible; in the evening it expands its corolla, and sheds a delightful perfume till the rising of the sun."

Bucke's Beauties, Harmonies, and Sublimities of Nature.—Vol. iii. p. 340.

Fair flower of silent night!
Unto thy bard an emblem thou shouldst be:
His fount of song, in hours of garish light,
Is closed like thee.

But, with the vesper hour,
Silence and solitude its depths unseal:
Its hidden springs, like thy unfolding flower,
Their life reveal.

Were it not sweeter still
To give imagination holier scope,
And deem that thus the future may fulfil
A loftier hope?

That, as thy lovely bloom
Sheds round its perfume at the close of day,
With beauty sweeter from surrounding gloom,
A star-like ray;—

So in life's dark decline,
When the grave's shadows are around me cast,
My spirit's hopes may like thy blossoms shine
Bright at the last;

And as the grateful scent
Of thy meek flower, the memory of my name!
Oh! who could wish for prouder monument,
Or purer fame?

The darkness of the grave
Would wear no gloom appalling to the sight,
Might Hope's fair blossom, like thy flowret brave
Death's wintry night.

Knowing the dawn drew nigh
Of an eternal, though a sunless day,
Whose glorious flowers must bloom immortally,
Nor fear decay !

A THOUGHT.

THE stillest streams lend life and light
To fairest meads of Spring;*
The bird that flutters least in sight
Is longest on the wing.

The sweetest flowers their odours shed
In silence, and alone;
And Wisdom's hidden fount is fed
By minds to fame unknown.

* "Stillest streams
Oft water fairest meadows, and the bird
That flutters least is longest on the wing."
COWPER.

But soon or late the time will come,
  Though long it seem deferred,
When loudest talkers shall be dumb,
  And silent doers heard.

Then shall a meed surpassing fame
  To lowly worth be given,
Whose toil hath sought with humble aim
  To guide the soul to Heaven.

RECOLLECTIONS OF CHICHESTER.

WRITTEN FOR THE BAZAAR IN AID OF THE INFIRMARY.

I

LAVANT! the Muse has graced thine humble stream,
Making thy lovely borders classic ground;
There thy own bard, "in penury's extreme,"
Sought in "*one Book*" a balm for every wound;
Nor far remote the pensive Cowper, crowned
With wreath more honoured than the minstrel's bay,
In Eartham's social bowers sweet refuge found,
Where beechen groves the lawny slopes array,
And on the distant main the sparkling sunbeams play

II.

Nor art thou, Lavant, loved for these alone,
  Though these attract a poet's sympathies,
And for thy failing urn may well atone;
  Yet to Cicestria bound by stronger ties,
Her silent spire up-pointing to the skies,
  Her blooming gardens and her cloistered shade,
Her cross antique, her ivied walls arise
  Before me oft, the while fond Memory's aid
Restores the long-lost scene in all its charms arrayed.

III.

But near the hoary piles of ancient days,
  With pinnacle and turret crested o'er,
A spacious structure greets my earnest gaze,
  Whose simple elegance delights me more.
Fancy beholds above its open door,
  (Unlike the words grav'd o'er the House of Woe,
Pourtrayed in Dante's wild terrific lore,
  "ALL YE WHO ENTER HERE EACH HOPE FOREGO!")
Faith, Charity, and Hope, smiling on all below.

IV.

Blest Refuge! see, the child of want and woe,
Who else had pined in sickness and despair,
Borne to thy lofty chambers, there to know
Art's healing aid, and Nature's purer air;
I see him tended by as watchful care
And skill as wait the favoured heir of wealth,
'Till science and humanity repair
Each devastation, as by magic stealth,
And send their patient forth in happiness and health.

V.

Then may His blessing, who is Lord of all,
Descend on thee as night-dews nourish earth!
May they partake it, who, at pity's call,
Still true to woman's purest, noblest worth,
Leave for thy scenes the brighter haunts of mirth,
To gladden by their presence grief and pain;
May peace be with them by their household hearth,
When to its social joys they turn again,
Peace which, when grief assails, can still their souls sustain.

And in that blest reward be theirs a part,
Whose zeal unwearied bade thy walls arise;
Who, skilled to "turn aside Death's levelled dart,"
Watch o'er thee with unshaken energies:
For every tear they wipe from Sorrow's eyes,
For every smile which Suffering's cheek steals o'er,
Be given that richer meed which Fame outvies,
On earth—a tear the less, a smile the more;
In heaven—of purer bliss an everlasting store!

STANZAS

ON A PORTRAIT BY A. E. CHALON, R. A.

"True yoke-fellow of Time,
With unabating effort, see, the palm
Is won, and by all nations shall be worn."
Wordsworth's Sonnet to Clarkson.

PAINTING! too oft thy magic power,
With prostituted aim,
Has given some idol of an hour
Thy own enduring fame.

Yet, by such trophies of thy skill,
The *heart* remains unmoved;
They wake no glow, they prompt no thrill,
By Virtue's voice approved.

The eye may on the portrait gaze,
The tongue its charms may own;
And yet *the painter's* meed of praise
Be given to HIM alone.

The warmer homage of the heart
To THEE our spirits give,
When subjects worthy of thy art
Upon the canvass live.

When there with gratitude we trace
His features, who has stood
The champion of an injured race,
Amongst the great and good;

One who, in Freedom's noble cause,
Has braved the oppressor's ire,
And pleaded Truth's and Virtue's laws
With zeal that could not tire.

Oh! then thy triumph we confess,
  Thy potent spell revere,
Which thus from dull forgetfulness
  Can rescue forms most dear!

Giving the casket of the soul,
  While yet that gem is there,
To live on Fame's immortal scroll,
  In colours bright and fair;

Whose impress in far distant days
  Shall waken thoughts sublime,
Due when Philanthropy displays
  Her "yoke-fellow of Time!"

THE DAUGHTER OF HERODIAS.

On his royal throne of state,
Herod sits, in power elate;
Rank and splendour round him wait,
Kingly pride enhancing;
He suspecting not the while
Hatred's cruelty and guile,
Gazes with approving smile
On that maiden dancing.

Lovely as the graceful play
Of a fount in moonlight's ray,
Or a proud swan on its way
Ripling waves dividing;

Airy as a sweet bird's flight
Through the azure realms of light,
Seems that form of beauty bright
Now before him gliding.

Ceased the music's festive sound!
Ceased the dancer's sportive bound!
When the monarch, looking round,
Craved the syren's pleasure:—
" Ask whate'er thou wilt," said he,
" And my oath I plight to thee
Thou shalt have it, though it be
Half my kingly treasure!"

" Give me here," the maiden said,
" John the Baptist's forfeit head!"
Herod heard with shame and dread,
And too late repented;
But false honour's specious tie,
Plighted oath,—his courtiers by
Doomed the martyr saint to die
Death revenge invented.

Heartless damsel! though the blame
Of this act of fraud and shame
Render odious Herod's name,
Thou that odium sharest:
More revolting was *thy* part,
Blending cruelty with art;—
Girl-hood's grace without its heart,
Hateful makes the fairest.

Bard or painter, who would dress,
"Beauty in unloveliness,"
Draw from thee: and thus express
All thy charms have brought thee;
Sterner tone and deeper hue
Best may body forth to view
That relentless mother—who
Thy foul lesson taught thee!

ON A PICTURE OF A SLEEPING CHILD.

How beautiful is sleep!
The peasant boy who, folded in his plaid,
Kept watch beside his sheep,
Seems lovelier in its silent beauty clad.

The warrior in his tent,
From fancied glory by its spell beguiled,
Looks calmly innocent,
As when he was a happy, gentle child.

The brow of hoary Age,
Pain's pallid cheek, and Sorrow's sunken eye,
E'en the curled lip of Rage,
Confess by turns its magic mastery.

But softest falls its dew
On childhood's brow and cheek; whether they wear
The rose's healthier hue,
Or early sickness plant the lily there.

How beautiful is sleep!
Yet if its purest beauties thou wouldst feel,
On the babe's slumber creep,
And bid thy heart confess its mute appeal.

Or to this picture turn
But for a moment thy attentive eye;
And let thy spirit learn
The pleading charm of slumbering infancy.

In breathless silence stand,
As by the timid turtle's downy nest;
See, on its tiny hand
Its little cheek in placid stillness prest!

Mark what a helpless charm
Is shed o'er every feature, every limb!
Behold that lovely arm;
That smiling mouth;—and if those eyes be dim,

Quenching their brighter flashes
Beneath those veiny lids! a softer spell
Upon their silken lashes
In quiet innocence appears to dwell.

Yet sleep is awful, too,
So like to death's its features it can dress;—
Meek slumberer! while I view
Thine own, I deeply feel its awfulness.

But unappalling seems
Even the awfulness of sleep like thine,
As fraught with heavenly dreams,
And images less earthly than divine.

Or dost thou now partake
That dreamless trance, in love and mercy given,
With sweet surprise to wake
A bright and blissful denizen of Heaven?

THE RECTORY.

"One of those spots the eye delights to look on
For its own loveliness, and which the heart
Loves for the sake of one far lovelier."

A BEAUTIFUL and pastoral scene,
A painter's study meet to be;
Or such as bard, in mood serene,
Might wish to roam in, fancy free.
Mark how that river to the sea
Wafts the fair vessel on its tide,
Breasting the rippling waves with glee,
Herself their ornament and pride.

How gracefully in towering height,
Those venerable cedars rise;
How beautiful, with foliage bright,
That laurel of gigantic size:
Here the tall cypress proudly vies
With ilex, chestnut, fir, and pine;
And there, with bloom of richer dyes,
Those tulip-trees in glory shine.

Nor lacks the spot that softer grace
Which Flora's sweetest charms bestow;
Her votary's eye may quickly trace,
In many a flowret's gorgeous glow,
And simpler beauties, traits that show,
Throughout the changeful, circling year,
As varying seasons come and go,
A gentler taste has lingered here!

But where is she, once wont to tend
In this loved spot each favourite flower,
Delighted through these walks to wend,
Or loiter in her summer bower?

Where is she fled, who, hour by hour,
Enjoyed their fragrance, praised their hue;
Whose modest pencil's graceful power
This sweet memorial of them drew?

Seek not to know! The tale is old,
That loveliest blossoms soonest fade:
That hearts of purest, gentlest mould,
In the cold earth are early laid;
The ivy-wreath and cypress-braid
Wait not for age to share their gloom;
Who hath not marked their chilling shade
Round beauty's, youth's, and virtue's tomb?

Yet, mourned and gentle one! shall we
So lightly estimate thy worth,
As hopelessly to mourn for thee
In any Eden found on earth?
Though fairest flowers of mortal birth,
Frail in their nature, briefly shine;
Though sorrow mar our hours of mirth,
A more enduring bliss is thine.

Much as we miss and mourn thee here,
  Yet Faith forbids all thankless gloom:
Hope whispers of a heavenly sphere,
  Where love and joy immortal bloom;
Oh! who can sorrow for thy doom,
  Viewing the path which thou hast trod,
And knowing that beyond the tomb
  "THE PURE IN HEART BEHOLD THEIR GOD?"

THE BATTLE OF GIBEON.

VERSES ILLUSTRATIVE OF MARTIN'S JOSHUA.

" For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood; but this with burning and fuel of fire."—ISAIAH ix. 5.

I.

FROM Gilgal's camp went forth, at dead of night,
The host of Israel: with the rising sun
They stood arrayed against the Amorite,
Beneath the regal heights of Gibeon,
Glorious in morning's splendour! Lebanon,
Dim in the distance, reared its lofty head;
Light clouds o'erhung the vale of Ajalon,
And the Five Armies, by their monarchs led
Not to mere mortal fight, but conflict far more dread.

II.

How beautiful, at matin's early prime,
Valley, and mountain, and that city fair!
Magnificent, yet fearfully sublime,
In few brief hours the scene depicted there!
Below the battle raged, and high in air
The gathering clouds, with tempest in their womb,
A supernatural darkness seemed to wear;
As heralding, by their portentous gloom,
Victory to Israel's host, her foes' impending doom!

III.

Upon a jutting crag, below the height
Where stands the royal city in its pride,
The ark is rested! in the people's sight
The priests and Joshua standing by its side;
Awhile the chief the sea of battle eyed,
Which heaved beneath:—in accents undismayed,
"Sun, stand thou still on Gibeon!" he cried,
"And thou, O Moon, o'er Ajalon be stayed!"
And holiest records tell the mandate was obeyed.

IV.

Look on the horrid conflict; mark the stream
Of lurid and unnatural light that falls,
Like some wild meteor's bright terrific gleam,
On Gibeon's steep and battlemented walls;
Her royal palace, and her pillared halls,
Seeming more gorgeous in its vivid blaze!
While o'er proud Lebanon the storm appals,
In jagged lines the arrowy lightning plays,
Softened to Israel's sight by intervening haze.

V.

But o'er the Amoritish camp the cloud
Bursts in its fury! on the race abhorred
The parting heavens, as from a pitchy shroud,
Their desolating hail-storm's wrath out-poured,
More vengeful in its ire than Israel's sword!
Thus was deliverance unto Gibeon shown;
And by the fearful battle of the Lord,
The army of the Amorites o'erthrown,
And the almighty power of Israel's God made known.

VI.

Made known by marvels awfully sublime!
Yet far more glorious in the Christian's sight
Than these stern terrors of the olden time,
The gentler splendours of that peaceful night,
When opening clouds displayed, in vision bright,
The heavenly host to Bethlehem's shepherd train,
Shedding around them more than cloudless light!
"Glory to God on high!" their opening strain,
Its chorus, "Peace on earth!" its theme Messiah's reign!

A POET'S APPEAL.

VERSES WRITTEN FOR THE BAZAAR IN AID OF THE STOKE NEWINGTON ASYLUM.

JUDGE not of the bard's appeal
By the rules which critics frame;
Let sweet charity reveal
To thy heart its nobler aim;
Wakening thoughts whose fruit may bless,
Wealth's redundance, Want's distress.

Art thou one of Fashion's train?
Bow before her better laws:
Let them not be heard in vain,
When they plead the sufferer's cause!
Be her generous voice obeyed;
Lend thy sympathy and aid.

These to waken in thy heart,
Fashion's daughters here have vied;
Used the pencil's magic art,
Or the restless needle plied:—
For *their* sakes and *thine*, the bard
Claims of thee their just reward.

Owns thy heart a holier flame?
Builds thy heart a loftier shrine?
Consecrate each virtuous aim,
Blending *human* with *divine!*
Love of God is Virtue's root;
Love *to man* its genuine fruit.

He who on the poor bestows
What he can, at Pity's call,
Lends to Him to whom he owes
Not that gift alone, but ALL!
Riches, health, are these thy lot?
Feel for those who know them not.

Hast thou neither? Think again;
Blessed was e'en the widow's mite:
Hers were poverty and pain;
Yet, in heaven's approving sight,
Her poor pittance far surpass'd
All into the Treasury cast.

Here thy heart and hand unclose
To the spells around thee spread;
They who soften others' woes
Still may "lift in hope the head:"
By the deeds thy faith approve,
Deeds of charity and love.

Reverence thou "the heaven-born three,"
Unto man in mercy given;
Faith, and Hope, and Charity
Blended, render earth like heaven:
And forget not, Truth's behest
Hath pronounced the last the best.

IN AN ALBUM.

There is glory in the gleaming
  Of the bright sun in the west;
There is beauty in the beaming
  Of the moon on ocean's breast:

There is music in the measure
  Of the skylark at his height;
And a sadder, softer pleasure
  In sweet Philomel's at night.

There is merriment and brightness
  In the goblet's sparkling flow;
And purity and whiteness
  In the newly-fallen snow.

But clouds too soon are shading
  The sunshine of delight,
And the boons of Time are fading,
  Still briefest when most bright.

To enjoy them while afforded,
  Is their Giver to obey;
But let not hope be hoarded
  On what soon must pass away.

Entrust *thy* hopes of pleasure
  Unto Faith's celestial key ;
Since where thou keep'st thy treasure,
  There thy heart will surely be!

THE DEATH OF ROBIN HOOD.

His pulse was faint, his eye was dim,
And pale his brow of pride;
He heeded not the monkish hymn
They chanted by his side.

He knew his parting hour was come;
And fancy wandered now
To freedom's rude and lawless home,
Beneath the forest bough.

A faithful follower, standing by,
Asked where he would be laid;
Then round the chieftain's languid eye
A lingering lustre played.

"Now raise me on my dying bed,
  Bring here my trusty bow,
And ere I join the silent dead,
  My arm that spot shall show."

They raised him on his couch, and set
  The casement open wide;
Once more with vain and fond regret
  Fair Nature's face he eyed.

With kindling glance and throbbing heart
  One parting look he cast,
Sped on its way the feathered dart,
  Sank back! and breathed his last!

And where it fell they dug his grave,
  Beneath the greenwood tree;
Meet resting-place for one so brave,
  So lawless, frank, and free.

GODIVA.

THE spacious streets were silent as the grave!
As though the place were uninhabited,
Or some deserted city of the dead,
With doors and windows closed:—when, meekly brave,
From feudal tyranny's stern law to save,
GODIVA from her palace forth was led,
In bashful boldness, of true Virtue bred;
While tears and prayers her only welcome gave
From thousands—LISTENING FOR HER COURSER'S TREAD!
So on she rode in unblenched majesty;
"Naked, yet not ashamed!"—her tresses pale
At once her modesty's and beauty's veil
From every wanton or unhallowed eye;
More proudly clothed in thoughts and feelings high
Than warrior panoplied in triple mail!

TO A CHILD TWO YEARS OLD.

SWEET BOY, thou bearest a noble name,*
To which more genuine honour clings
Than muse of mine would dare to claim
For warriors, statesmen, bards, or kings:
These prove, too oft, ignoble things,
Howe'er the world their glory praise,
Or poets tune their lyres' proud strings
To servile, but elaborate lays.

* That of the reputed founder of the Society of Friends.

Yes, unto thee a name is given,
  Perchance a humble one on earth,
Yet haply registered in heaven,
  With their's of purest, holiest worth:
Who, undeterred by Folly's mirth,
  Fashion's cold sneer, Oppression's rod,
Held fast to hopes of heavenly birth,
  And knew no fear but that of God.

E'en such was he who owned of yore
  Thy name, and gave it meek renown;
Nobly his Master's cross he bore,
  And fearless won the unfading crown:
The worldling's jest, the bigot's frown
  He braved, and in them could rejoice;
A dungeon's floor his bed of down,
  An outcast's lot his cheerful choice.

Dear boy, since such a name is thine,
  May grace be given thee from on high,
By Him who every gift divine
  To those who seek it will supply;

To guard its pure integrity
  Through life, in thought, act, word, and will;
And when thou 'rt called upon to die,
  To leave it undishonoured still.

TO AN ELEPHANT.

GIGANTIC in thy bulk and height
Art thou ; yet gentle in thy might,
As dew that falls on flowers ;
And, though unwieldly be thy frame,
At times thy instinct puts to shame
Man's boasted reasoning powers.

So grave and reverend is thy mien,
So much of majesty serene,
Around thee seems to cling,
That, could my vote decisive be,
The lion should give place to thee,
And own thee as his king.

Not pent up in a caravan,
Nor taught to aid the wrath of man
In honour's gory field:
Nor in the splendour of the chase
Can thought discern thy native grace
In regal pride revealed.

This would we estimate aright,
Fancy should wing her eager flight
Beneath far eastern skies;
And there thy happier life should paint,
Untutored by each harsh restraint
Thy vassalage implies.

I love in thought with thee to roam
'Mid scenes, thy freedom's fitting home,
Through jungles intertwined:
Uncultured and untrodden plains,
Shadowy and vast, where Nature reigns
In savage pomp enshrined.

There could I picture thee—at morn,
Not solitary and forlorn,
But roaming, wild and free,
Among thy peers;—in noon-tide's heat
Enjoying thy siestra sweet
Beneath some branching tree.

Again at eve I see thee stray,
Solemn and stately, on thy way,
Through thickets still as death;
And, 'mid the silence of the night,
I seem to hear, though lost to sight,
Thy deep-drawn slumbering breath!

'Tis but a dream, a vision all!
And see, my fancy to recall,
And in recalling shock it,
That trunk, which from the topmost bough
Once gathered mangoes, pilfers now
Thy keeper's dirty pocket!

ON A PORTRAIT

BY SPAGNOLETTO.

I.

'Tis not the subject!—More than this
My eye had loved to greet
Some quiet scene of past'ral bliss,
The Muses' calm retreat:
Or watch-tower, beetling o'er the sea:
Or broken bank, with scathed tree:
Or, yet more mildly sweet,
The matron majesty and grace
Of some Madonna's lovely face.

II.

Such is the beauty whose soft spell
   Is dearest to my heart:
On which thought most delights to dwell
   In Nature or in Art;
Its gentle, fascinating power
To Sorrow's darker, colder hour
   Brief sunshine can impart,
Wakening calm thoughts and feelings high
Which soar beyond mortality.

III.

Yet much the genius would I prize
   In nobler form displayed,
Whose sterner, stronger energies
   Are deeply here pourtrayed:
Whose power, like Rembrandt's, has imbued
With solemn grandeur, bold and rude,
   And magic light and shade,
This portrait of the olden time,
Dim, sombre, shadowy, and sublime!

IV.

Not brightening tint, not mellowing tone,
Thy mastery supply:
A higher charm is round thee thrown
By hoar antiquity;
In thee my musing thought reveres
The memory of revolving years,
Now passed for ever by!
Of them, of thee, how many a thought
With vague conjecture might be fraught.

V.

Thrice fifty years, and more, hast thou
Time's devastations dared,
And still that hand, and arm, and brow,
By age are unimpaired;
While he, whose master-hand first drew,
And gave to each its living hue,
Man's common lot hath shared:
His life a scanty span appears
Compared with thy protracted years.

VI.

But WHO wast thou?—that flask of wine,
The uplifted tambourine,
Should speak a mood of joyaunce thine
Which loved the festive scene:
Yet no glad smile of humour gay
Is seen in sunny light to play
O'er thy stern, fearless mien,—
Projecting from its mass of shade
Laughter to chill, and mirth upbraid.

VII.

A bandit, at his lonely feast?
A monk within his cell,
From cloistered solitude released—
Art thou?—or, truth to tell,
Did Spagnoletto here design
To paint *himself*?—face, form like thine
Befit the artist well,
If in his works we rightly scan
The moods and passions of the man:

VIII.

But, be thou who thou may'st, declare,
  If thou canst find a tongue,
How time has passed with thee, and *where?*
  In what far homes up-hung?
Hast thou e'er graced the trophied hall
Of wealth and grandeur, on whose wall
  Bright lamps their lustre flung;
While thronged beneath, in rich array,
The young, the thoughtless, and the gay.

IX.

Thus Fancy chronicles thy lot;
  Then thy sad fall pourtrays,
Borne from the castle to the cot;
  There, by the wood-fire's blaze,
Now pale and dim, now proud and bright,
Striking some simple urchin's sight
  With awe and mute amaze:—
And thence by Taste or Traffic's wile
Transplanted to our northern isle.

X.

Yet why should Fancy more make known
The history of thy lot?
Or in an exhibition shown,
Or broker's stores forgot?
Who sold, who bought thee, unto me
Is but a vision, and to thee
I ween it matters not:—
Enough for me to feel thy power,
For thee to soothe my lonely hour.

THE TRANSLATION OF ENOCH.

And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."
GENESIS.

THOUGH proudly through the vaulted sky
Was borne Elisha's sire,
And dazzling unto mortal eye
His car and steeds of fire:

To me as glorious seems the change
Accorded to thy worth;
As instantaneous and as strange
Thy exit from this earth.

Something which wakes a deeper thrill,
These few brief words unfold,
Than all description's proudest skill
Could of that hour have told.

Fancy's keen eye may trace the course
Elijah held on high:
The car of flame, each fiery horse,
Her visions may supply;—

But THY transition mocks each dream
Framed by her wildest power,
Nor can her mastery supreme
Conceive thy parting hour.

Were angels, with expanded wings,
As guides and guardians given?
Or did sweet sounds from seraphs' strings
Waft thee from earth to heaven?

'Twere vain to ask: we know but this—
  Thy path from grief and time
Unto eternity and bliss,
  Mysterious and sublime!

With God thou walkedst: and wast not!
  And thought and fancy fail
Further than this to paint thy lot,
  Or tell thy wondrous tale.

IN AN ALBUM.

NOT in November's cheerless gloom
Should poet sing for thee;
But in May's renovated bloom,
'Mid sights and sounds of glee.

Then in some brightly opening flower
Might thy sweet type be shown,
Or from the songster in his bower
Be caught joy's genuine tone.

Yet all unworthy of the lyre
Were he, who for thy sake
Would wish *the season* to inspire
What THOU might'st well awake.

Thou art thyself in life's young spring,
  Nor can November's skies
Around thy heart their influence fling,
  Or dim thy smiling eyes.

Thine is the guileless glow of heart,
  The spirit yet unbowed,
Which Spring, alone, can ne'er impart,
  Nor sternest Winter shroud.

Oh! be it thus in after life,
  That thou the meed may'st win,
To know in darkest days of strife
  Sunshine and peace within!

"OH! FOR THAT CITY, FAIR AND BRIGHT."

Oh! for that city, fair and bright,
Which shall not pass away;
The glory of The Lord its light,
The Lamb its sunless day.

Whose gates are pearl, whose street is gold,
Whose wall of jasper stands
On precious stones of worth untold,
Reared not by mortal hands.

Where tears are wiped from every eye,
And none with anguish groan;—
Death lost in immortality!
And "former things unknown."

Who only shall admittance win?
The nations of the saved!
Whom Jesus hath redeemed from sin,
And in his blood hath laved.

Who shall in no wise enter there?
Those who their Lord deny,
Who have not knelt to Him in prayer,
But trusted to a lie.

My unknown reader, whatsoe'er
May be thy sect or name,
Ask of thy heart with reverent fear,
CAN I AN ENTRANCE CLAIM?

ON SIR PHILIP SYDNEY'S BIRTH-DAY.

Whose birth-day on the Muse may call,
If thine remain unsung?
Thyself in camp, in bower, and hall,
The theme of old and young.

Two hundred years and more have fled
Since thou on earth wert seen,
Yet art thou of the honoured dead
Whose memory still is green.

Thy life, though brief, was fair and bright,
And crowned with knightly fame;
Thy death, though early, proved thy right
To win a hero's name.

And what could chivalry desire
　But so to live and die?
And to bequeath to heart and lyre
　Such immortality!

SONNET

TO JOHN FITZGERALD, ESQ. M.P.

ON RECEIVING FROM HIS LADY A PRINT OF CANNING.

FITZGERALD, would that minstrel art of mine
Could worthily thy lady's gift repay,
Crowning your honoured friend with deathless bay,
And giving you in glorious verse to shine.
But what beyond the proud emphatic line
Which speaks you CANNING'S FRIENDS! could song convey,
In glowing words, *your* title to display
To the just homage of the tuneful Nine?
Nor can your favourite need another lyre
Than that by his lamented death unstrung;
Should lend his muse and memory fitting tongue;
Add to the poet's wit the patriot's fire,
And what could e'en your friendship more desire
In celebration of his glory sung?

STANZAS,

ON THE SAME ENGRAVING;

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED TO THE DONOR.

Were these thy features? did they wear
This fascinating grace?
Where is the statesman's brow of care?
The pride of power and place?

Where are the traces—stern, yet cold,
Ambition left behind?
Each lineament I here behold
Is noble, generous, kind.

My fancy only hoped to meet
Much that I might admire;
Still more with glad surprise I greet
Attachment to inspire.

Thanks, then, unto that art divine
Whose impress thus hath proved
The purer, happier triumph thine
To be admired and loved!

THE RESURRECTION.

Hark to the trumpet's sound!
  It rends the vaulted skies!
      As by a peal of thunder
      The graves are burst asunder,
And from their depths profound
  The dead awake and rise!

For Death is conquered now:—
  The Grave's last victory won;—
      That trumpet's thrilling token
      Proclaims their power broken;
And triumph crowns the brow
  Of God's redeeming Son!

THE SEA.

The sea! the sea! its lonely shore;
Its billows, crested white;
The clouds which flit its bosom o'er,
Or sunbeams dancing bright:
The breakers bursting on the strand,
In thunder to the ear;
The frowning cliff, the silvery sand,
Each, all to me are dear.

The sea! the sea! Oh, tell me not
Of Art's triumphant power!
Its proudest trophies are forgot
In one lone sea-side hour:

Yon giant bark that breasts the tide,
  Though beautiful and brave,
Beats not the curlew in its pride,
  Which mounts the stormiest wave.

The sea! the sea! the moonlit sea!
  How calm its slumbering tides!
A weather-shore upon her lee,
  The bark in safety glides:
The steersman keeps his watch alone,
  What time his messmates sleep,
While to the strand, in gentlest tone,
  The murmuring billows creep.

The sea! the sea! the stormy sea!
  How dreadful in its wrath,
When, bounding o'er the billows free.
  The bark pursues her path:
A hidden rock arrests her keel;
  She founders in the surge;
Her seamen's knell the thunder peal,
  The howling winds their dirge.

The sea! the sea! the treasured sea!
What mines of wealth untold,
Could human art but set them free,
Thy hidden coffers hold:
The spoils of navies in their might,
The young, the fair, the brave;
With pearls and gems of lustre bright,
All sleep beneath thy wave.

The sea! the sea! the glorious sea!
What has the earth so fair,
Of hill or valley, grove or lea,
Which with it may compare?
Oh! I could sit for hours to look
Upon its wide expanse;
And read in its unwritten book,
Fresh charms at every glance.

The sea! the sea! the solemn sea!
It has a voice for all;
And e'en to hearts of happiest glee
May sober thoughts recall.

To me it speaks of distant days,
Of vanished hopes and fears;—
Who silently can on it gaze
With eyes undimmed by tears?

The sea! the sea! the changeless sea!
Of tears I take my leave;
It half recalls a smile from me
To think for what I grieve:
The hopes and fears I sorrowed o'er
Were hopes and fears of *time*;
Thou art the type of something more
Unchanging and sublime.

TO JOHN MARTIN.

ON HIS MAGNIFICENT PRINT OF JOSHUA.

BOLDEST painter of our day,
Meetest for the poet's lay,
What but genius like thy own
Such a vision could have shown?

Vision even more sublime!
Than that feast of olden time,
When the Babylonish king
Feasted high his courtly ring.

When, upon the sculptured wall,
Sight each gazer to appal!
By fierce lightnings blazing bright
Shone the characters of light.

Other artists to the life
Paint of mortal men the strife;
Here thy genius has outpoured
Sterner battle of the Lord!

Light and shadow, death and doom,
Glory's brightness, horror's gloom,
Rocky heights of awful form,
Grandeur of the bursting storm.

Vistas of unbounded space,
Architecture's richest grace,
Lurid clouds by lightnings riven,
Conflict fierce on earth, in heaven!

Such the marvels proud and high
Brought out by thy mastery;
Gazed at—'till the painter's theme
Far transcends the poet's dream.

THE STARS.

The stars! the stars! go forth by night,
Lift up thine eyes on high,
And view the countless orbs of light
Which gem the vaulted sky:
Go forth in silence and alone,
This glorious sight to scan;
And bid thy humbled spirit own
The littleness of man.

The stars! the stars! thou canst not dream
For thee alone they shine:
That thus the heavens with splendour gleam,
To glad those eyes of thine;

Each orb that decks yon vaulted dome,
For aught thy pride can tell,
May be the brighter, happier home
Where deathless spirits dwell.

The stars! the stars! Oh well may pride
Confess the truths they preach:
Yet to devotion, eagle-eyed,
Exalted thoughts they teach;
They tell not only of the might
Of HIM enthroned above,
But trace, in characters of light,
His mercy and his love.

The stars! the stars! recall that one
Which shone o'er Bethlehem's plains,
When GOD sent down his glorious SON,
To break our galling chains:
To shed his blood; upon the tree
Our chastisement to bear;
Oh! think of Him who died for thee,
With gratitude and prayer.

The stars! the stars! the silent stars
  Unto the worldling's ear;
But he whose sense no passion mars,
  Their voice divine can hear;
To him they sing those heavenly songs
  Which seraph harps employ,
And he in spirit joins the throngs
  Who with them "shout for joy!"

ON HEARING THE WAITS.

'Tis sweet to roam in blythesome Spring
Through meads with wild-flowers gay,
And hear the birds their matins sing
From many a budding spray;
Sweeter in Summer moonlight pale
To hear the merry nightingale.

Cheerful the sounds in Autumn heard
From labour's rustic throng;
The breeze by fitful laughter stirred,
The shout or jocund song,
The distant cry for largess boon,
Echoed beneath the broad bright moon.

Nor lacks stern Winter's long dark night
  Its tributary strain:
And dear to me the ancient rite
  Which thus asserts its reign;
A soothing charm is o'er it cast,
The hallowed glories of THE PAST!

Though rude and homely be the sounds,
  And void of music's grace,
They bear my thoughts beyond the bounds
  Which fetter time and space:
To Fancy's ear their tuneless chime
Is fraught with melody sublime.

I think of Bethlehem's distant plains,
  Where shepherds watched by night,
Whose ears first caught the joyful strains,
  Whose eyes the heavenly light:
I think of him whose sinless birth
Was thus made known to sinful earth.

I muse in thought, until to me
  The past is present still:
I tread thy walks, Gethsemane,
  Or climb the Olive hill!
Can Art's proud scorn my feelings freeze
Tow'rd sounds that waken thoughts like these?

FIRESIDE QUATRAINS,

TO CHARLES LAMB.

It is a mild and lovely winter night,
The breeze without is scarcely heard to sigh;
The crescent moon, and stars with twinkling light,
Are shining calmly in a cloudless sky.

Within the fire burns clearly; in its rays
My old oak book-case wears a cheerful smile,
Its antique mouldings brightened by the blaze
Might vie with any of more modern style.

That rural sketch; that scene in Norway's land
Of rocks and pine-trees by the torrent's foam;
That landscape traced by Gainsborough's youthful hand,
Which shows how lovely is a peasant's home;—

That virgin and her child, with those sweet boys;
All of the fire-light own the genial gleam,
And lovelier far than in day's light and noise
To me at this still hour their beauties seem.

One more there is, which should not pass by me
Unhonoured or unsung, because it bears
In many a lonely hour my thoughts to thee,
Heightening to fancy every charm it wears.

How beautiful that group! A mother mild,
And young, and fair, who fain would teach to read
That urchin by her patience unbeguiled,
The open volume on her lap to heed.

With fingers thrust into his ears he looks
As though he wished his weary task were done;
And more the love of pastime than of books
Lurks in that arch dark eye so full of fun.

Graver, or in the pouts, 'twere hard to tell
   Which of the twain, his elder sister plies
Her sempstress labours, none can read so well
   The mute expression of her downcast eyes.

Dear Charles, if thou shouldst haply chance to know
   Where such a print once hung in days of yore,
Its highest worth, its deepest charm to show,
   I need not tax my rhymes or fancy more.

It is not womanhood in all its grace,
   And boyhood in its beauty—only plead;
Though these each stranger eye delights to trace,
   And many a plaudit oft has been their meed.

With them my thoughts and feelings fondly blend
   A hidden charm, unborrowed from the eye,
Claimed by each object that recalls a friend,
   And chronicles the pleasant hours gone by.

ENGLAND'S OAK.

LET India boast its spicy trees,
Whose fruit and gorgeous bloom
Give to each faint and languid breeze
Its rich and rare perfume.

Let Portugal and haughty Spain
Display their orange groves;
And France exult her vines to train
Around her trim alcoves.

Let Norway vaunt its hardy pine,
And Araby its palm,
Libanus for its cedars shine,
And Gilead for its balm.

Old England has a tree as strong,
As stately as them all,
As worthy of a minstrel's song
In cottage, or in hall.

'Tis not the yew-tree, though it lends
Its greenness to the grave;
Nor willow, though it fondly bends
Its branches o'er the wave:

Nor birch, although its slender tress
Be beautifully fair,
As graceful in its loveliness
As maiden's flowing hair.

'Tis not the poplar, though its height
May from afar be seen;
Nor beech, although its boughs be dight
With leaves of glossy green.

All these are fair, but they may fling
  Their shade unsung by me;
My favourite, and the forest's king,
  The British Oak shall be!

Its stem though rough is stout and sound,
  Its giant branches throw
Their arms in shady blessings round
  O'er man and beast below;

Its leaf, though late in spring it shares
  The zephyr's gentle sigh,
As late and long in Autumn wears
  A deeper, richer dye.

Type of an honest English heart,
  It opes not at a breath,
But having opened, plays its part,
  Until it sinks in death:

Not early won by gleam of sun
Its beauties to unfold;
One of the last in skies o'ercast
To lose its faithful hold.

Its acorns, graceful to the sight,
Are toys to childhood dear;
Its misletoe, with berries white,
Adds mirth to Christmas cheer.

And when we reach life's closing stage,
Worn out with care or ill,
For childhood, youth, or hoary age,
Its arms are open still.

But prouder yet its glories shine,
When, in a nobler form,
It floats upon the heaving brine,
And braves the bursting storm.

Or when, to aid the work of love,
  To some benighted clime
It bears glad tidings from above,
  Of gospel truths sublime;

Oh! then, triumphant in its might,
  O'er waters dim and dark,
It seems, in heaven's approving sight,
  A *second* glorious ARK!

On earth the forest's honoured king!
  Man's castle on the sea!
Who will another tree may sing,
  Old England's oak for me!

AN EVENING THOUGHT.

ON such a glowing sunset sky
I gaze with "thoughts too deep for tears,"
'Till Fancy longs to soar on high
To brighter, purer, happier spheres.

Though soon, to me, its glories fade,
And dark'ning shadows bring on night,
'Tis but the mists of earth that shade
The vision from my wistful sight.

Oh! for the hour when, like a dream,
Those mists of earth shall pass away,
And round me shine the brighter beam
Of heaven's eternal cloudless day

CŒUR DE LION.

A WARRIOR'S arm of stalwart might,
Which well could wield the spear or sword;
A heart undaunted in the fight,
And gallant at the festive board;
A monarch's and a minstrel's fame
In tented fields of Palestine;
A bold crusader's dreaded name;—
These, Cœur de Lion! these were thine

Yet what was the result of all
Thy skill and prowess in the fray?
Thy bearing in the banquet hall,
The gayest there among the gay?

What meed did sword or lyre obtain,
  Once far renowned o'er land and sea?
Rude honours, and a ruder strain
  Were all, alas! they won for thee.

A name to still a froward child,*
  Or taunt a painim's startled steed;
A wreath by blood and tears defiled—
  These were thy valour's empty meed.
Then who would chivalry deplore?
  Or who its barbarous splendours sing?
Since all its glories did no more
  For England's lion-hearted king!

* "In Palestine, Coeur de Lion left behind him an impression that long survived himself. His dreaded name was employed by the Syrian mothers to silence their froward children; and if a horse suddenly started from the way, his rider would exclaim: 'Dost thou think King Richard is in that bush?'"—MARIA HACK's *English Stories*.

JOHN HOWARD.

A SPIRIT of unwearied zeal,
  Patience, which nothing could subdue,
A heart the woes of man to feel,
  In every varied form and hue;
An open hand, and eye, and ear,
  For all in prisons doomed to pine;
A voice the captive's hopes to cheer;—
  These, noble Howard! these were thine.

In cells by Mercy's feet untrod
  'Twas thine the mourner's lot to scan;
Thy polar star the love of God,
  Thy chart and compass love to man.

To mitigate the law's stern wrath
  Thou trod'st, with steadfast heart and eye,
"An open, unfrequented path
  To fame and immortality!"

What was *thy* meed? a stranger's grave,
  Divided from thy native land
By many a white and stormy wave,
  By many a weary waste of sand.
Yet to that lone and distant tomb
  Thy name its memory may entrust,
'Till cloudless glory burst its gloom,
  And thou shalt rise to meet the just!

STANZAS

ON RECEIVING FROM A FRIEND AN EARLY SKETCH OF GAINSBOROUGH'S.

Loved for the sake of Gainsborough's name,
Whose eye, and hand, and magic art,
Have justly won enduring fame
In many an English heart.

Dear for the giver's sake no less,
Who gave a vision so imbued
With Nature's loveliness to bless
A poet's solitude.

Yet dearer for the cherished sake
  Of thoughts and feelings that have been;
Which once more seem from death to wake,
  Revived by such a scene.

Feelings and thoughts of shady trees,
  And sunny plains, and brooklet's tone,
Of glowing sky and balmy breeze;—
  Now but by memory known!

SONNET

TO A BROTHER POET, ON HIS OPINION THAT NO ONE CARES ABOUT POETS OR THEIR WORKS.

O SUFFER not thy spirit so to deem,
Though worldly may appear our later day,
That thus hath fallen on poet or his lay
The chilling insult of neglect's extreme.
Yet do the Muses' glorious pages teem
With vivid interest for the grave or gay;
Childhood, and Youth, and Age with tresses grey
Honour the bard who sings a noble theme.
It *is* a worldly age; but faith is mine
To think and feel that, worldly though it be,
Many there are who have not bent the knee
To sordid gain:—who love the Muses' shrine;
And for the faithful votaries of the Nine
Cherish their old affections frank and free.

SONNET

TO THE SAME ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

But if the love of poesy be fled
From the fair island that gave Milton birth;
If Traffic's din, or Fashion's heartless mirth,
Have made *their* followers to its glories dead;—
Oh! let not those whose spirits have been fed
On its pure manna, by their household hearth
Publish the fact, and over sea and earth
Of our apostacy the tidings spread!
Still let the bard, if all beside forget
The Muses' charms, proclaim their peerless beauty,
Assert their rights, and do a minstrel's duty;
Lest, when the lingering star of song be set,
His ear should hear a voice, with vain regret,
Utter the mournful language, "Et tu Brute!"

THE DEATH OF RUFUS.

I.

To chase the deer with horn and hound,
  King William bent his way,
And through the forest depths profound
  He swept in proud array;
Where erst the peasant's cot had stood,
The royal hunter tracked the wood
  To seek his sylvan prey;
Reckless of all the grief and care
His thoughtless will had scattered there.

II.

Vainly the monk, with warning tongue,
Had spoke of omen drear:
The monarch to his saddle sprung
Like one who knew not fear;
Nor thought he as he rode the turf,
That the small garden of the serf
To him had been as dear,
As now unto his kingly pride
The forest which his sport supplied.

III.

Not thus are chronicled in Heaven
The rights and wrongs of man:
For He by whom the first were given
The last will strictly scan;
The oppressor triumphs for an hour:
But, soon or late, a holier Power
By his almighty ban
Avenges on the haughtiest head
The outrage of the meanest shed.

IV.

'Twas near the sunset hour, the chase,
Of all that hunter train,
Had left but two with faltering pace
Its honours to obtain:
Noble and knight and yeoman stout,
Whose bugle peal or gallant shout
Had echoed o'er the plain,
Each after each, with toil out-worn,
Had ceased to follow hound or horn.

V.

Sir Walter and the king were now
The only hunters there!
When, bearing high his antlered brow
With proud majestic air,
A noble stag, the greenwood's pride,
As if their laggard zeal to chide,
Sprang from his forest lair,
And bounded like a vision bright
Before the monarch and the knight.

VI.

King Rufus drew his bow, and sped
An arrow from its string!
The haughty stag, though wounded, fled
Like wild bird on the wing;—
Straight took the archer knight his mark:
His shaft just grazed a tree's rough bark,
And then transfixed the king!
It reached his heart, for Tyrell's bow
Could scarce deal less than mortal blow.

VII.

One moment gazed with grief and awe
That guiltless regicide,
And struck with speechless horror saw
The turf with crimson dyed;
The next he gave his steed the rein,
And swift as lightening o'er the plain
His eager course he hied,
Far over ocean's briny wave
To seek an exile's nameless grave.

VIII.

A bloody corpse the Rufus lay
  On thât lone forest ground,
'Till those who chanced to come that way
  Their late despoiler found;
To Wittanceaster's minster fair
They bore him, but brief honours there
  His kingly memory crowned;
Nor did one peasant's grateful tear
Hallow the royal hunter's bier.

SYR HERON.

INSCRIBED TO MY INGENIOUS FRIEND, JOHN MAJOR, ON RECEIVING FROM HIM A SEAL BEARING THE IMPRESS OF THAT BIRD.

" And on the border of that silent lake
  There stood, with downcast eye and folded wing,
A stately HERON, as if loth to wake
  Of that still water the least rippling;
Yet is he of that marshy waste the king,
  And there he takes his pleasure."—

Lays of Idlesse.

MAJOR! a poet's tuneful thanks,
Might my poor verses keep their ranks
    To prove that title true,
For such a token of thy taste
As thou hast now before me placed,
    Most justly are thy due.

But I so rate "beyond all price"
The execution and device
Here by the artist wrought,
I half distrust my homely lays,
To give thy friend his meed of praise,
Or thank thee as I ought.

I marvel not that such a bird
Should be by each of us preferred
To many a one more fair
Of plumage, and more proud of song:
We both should do our feelings wrong
Did we his praise forbear.

Couldst *thou*, as Izaak Walton's chum,
In tall Syr Heron's laud be dumb?
A *feathered fisher* he!
And that to Izaak and thyself,
Votaries of angling more than pelf,
His passport well might be.

Buffon, indeed, has run him down;
But shall we mind the Frenchman's frown?
Who, if he ever saw one,
As Yankees say, could poorly "*guess*"
The creature's quiet happiness,
And, therefore, ill could draw one.

He calls him haggard, gloomy, spare,
Talks of his solitude and care,
His wretchedness and want;
As if he lived in joy's despite,
Doomed with a craving appetite
Still hopelessly to pant.

My friend, a happier creed is thine;
You "brothers of the rod and line"
Well know the joy of watching
From hour to hour by lake or stream;
Know too the luxury supreme
What you have sought—of catching!

Then thou too art boon Nature's child;
And for her sake spots lone and wild
Are dear to heart and eye;
For their sake, and for his no less,
Thou well hast chosen for impress
A heron's effigy!

I love him too:—for to my mind
I know not where a bard might find,
'Mid all the feathered throng,
One with more poesy imbued,
Or bearing more similitude
To many a child of song.

Retired and shy, of pensive mien,
Not gaily plumed, but lank and lean,
A silent, patient creature;
To me he seems a type or sign
Of countless votaries of the Nine,
In character and feature.

And then the haunts he fondly chooses!
Where, hermit-like, he stands and muses,
Until he seems to be,
Moveless in dream-like silence lone,
Some spectre bird, or sculptured stone,
Or stump of scathed tree.

He is *my* favourite for the sake
Of rushy pool or sedgy lake,
Oft by his presence graced:
A regal bird in days of yore;
And monarch still, in minstrel lore,
Of the lone marshy waste.

Not crownless, though to him denied
The silky plumes that don with pride
The lovelier egret;—
For with a royal mien he bears
His arching neck, and proudly wears
His flowing crest of jet.

Then doubt not that with "right good will"
I greet what here thy artist's skill
So well has represented;
And if the idle rhymes I send
Serve but to please my Major friend,
We both may be contented.

SONNET

TO W. H. BROOKE, ESQ.

Thou hast a graceful pencil, ready pen,
A lively fancy, and from classic hoards
Canst bring rich store of fitly spoken words;
Such gifts, abused by ill-designing men,
(I leave to history, how, and where, and when,)
Have been as baneful as bad council-boards,
The bulls of popes, or warriors' conqu'ring swords:
Heaven grant they ne'er may prove such pests again!
But thou, my friend, so honourest the worth
Of painting and of song, that used by thee,
These are admired as they were wont to be
Ere hearts were wedded to this sordid earth;
Or in the limits of becoming mirth,
Thy gifts but prove a source of harmless glee.

TO A MOURNER.

I KNEW not that lamented one
Who *was* thy help and stay;
Yet not for this my muse would shun
Her Christian debt to pay,
Could I conceive that verse of mine
Might soothe a wounded heart like thine.

But thou hast long been taught to whom
The sick at heart must flee:
Who, in each hour of grief and gloom,
Their only strength can be;
Look unto Him with steadfast eye,
Nor doubt His gracious arm is nigh.

He still by His almighty hand
Can open, at thy need,
Sweet springs, as in a thirsty land,
In Sorrow's desert feed;
And through the influence of His grace
Make glad thy solitary place.

Then look not outward! Trust to Him
Who sweetens Sorrow's cup:
Whose love, when eyes with tears are dim,
Can bear the spirit up:
Whose mercy, e'en in darkest days,
Can make the mourner sing his praise.

Well has thy spirit understood,
In hour of deepest woe,
That "worst events to final good
Through secret channels flow:"
And bright their bursting forth will prove
To humble faith and holy love!

SPRING.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF A FRIEND, FOR A CHILD'S BOOK.

THE bleak winds of Winter are past,
The frost and the snow are both gone,
And the trees are beginning at last
To put their green leafiness on.

The snowdrop, like ivory white,
The crocus, as yellow as gold,
Th' hepatica, hardy and bright,
Have ventured their bloom to unfold.

And, sweeter than these, in the lane,
On its warm, sheltered bank may be found,
The violets in blossom again,
Shedding Spring's richest odours around.

The primrose and cowslip are out,
And the fields are with daisies all gay;
While the butterflies, flitting about,
Seem glad in the sunshine to play.

Not more glad than the bee is to gather
New honey to store in his cell;
He too is abroad this fine weather,
To rifle cup, blossom, and bell.

The goldfinch, and blackbird, and thrush,
Are brimful of music and glee;
They have each got a nest in some bush,
And the rook has built his on a tree.

The lark's home is hid in the corn,
But he springs from his low nest—on high,
And warbles his welcome to morn,
'Till he seems like a speck in the sky.

Oh! who would be sleeping in bed
When the skies with such melody ring,
And the bright earth beneath him is fed
With the beauty and fragrance of Spring?

PRAISE AND PRAYER.

CAN *words* alone *the first* display?
  Prove we *the last* by *bended knee?*
The right to praise, the power to pray,
  Must both be given us, Lord, by Thee.

Thy Spirit must the heart prepare,
  And faith in thy dear Son be known,
Before the voice of praise or prayer
  Can rise like incense to Thy throne.

Then give the power Thy grace imparts,
  The love by Jesus shown of yore;
That praiseless lives and prayerless hearts
  May prove our guilt and shame no more.

I KNOW THY PATH.

I KNOW thy path has many a cloud,
With many a rankling thorn is fraught;
I know thy spirit oft is bowed
With heavy care and anxious thought;
Nor boast mine own so much of bliss,
That I should love thee less for this.

I can conceive thy faith is tried,
From day to day, how, where, or when,
Thy industry may best provide
" Things honest in the sight of men;"
With cause to own, when all is done,
Toil's scanty meed is hardly won.

Yet lift up head and heart in hope,
Tread on thy dark and thorny way,
Meekly with toil and sorrow cope,
Be patient faith thy spirit's stay;
So shalt thou yet His goodness own
Whose love conducts through "paths unknown."

E'en now, at times, amid the gloom
Of severing clouds, a light is seen;
At intervals the transient bloom
Of flowers springs up life's thorns between;
If *rare* such blossom and such beam,
The brighter from that cause they seem.

Oh! think not they would show so fair
Were flowers and sunshine *always* ours;
Those who life's *pleasures* only share,
Know little of *Affection*'s powers;
Nor can the purer hopes of Heaven
To hearts that live for earth be given.

Then lift up head and heart in hope,
  Tread on thy dark and thorny way,
Meekly with toil and sorrow cope,
  Be patient faith thy spirit's stay;
And thou shalt yet His goodness own
Whose love conducts through "paths unknown."

If not in time, of this be sure,
  Well can eternity make up,
By joys unfading, pangless, pure,
  For trial's thorns and sorrow's cup;
And more than sunshine's brightest glow
Atone for darkest clouds below.

IF A LIVELIER MEASURE."

If a livelier measure may lighten
Thy thoughts of their wearisome load,
If the beauties of Nature may brighten
Thy life on its pilgrimage road;—
The harp that has hung on the willow,
The moonlight that sleeps on the tomb,
The foam-crest that whitens the billow,
Shall tell thee of glory in gloom.

Sweet Philomel, tenderly pouring
Her strains on the silence of night
The skylark, to heaven's gate soaring
'Till lost in the blaze of its light;

The sun, which a tempest had shrouded,
When bursting again from the sky,
The stars, which night's dark vault had clouded,
When once more they come forth on high;—

The ivy, a scathed oak entwining,
Which but for its greenness seems dead;
Spring flowerets, in young beauty shining,
With winter's sere leaves for their bed;
The butterfly, joyfully urging
Its flight from the chrysalis cell;
The bow from the storm-cloud emerging,
Of hope and of gladness shall tell.

All these to thought's glance as it ranges
Bring tidings it gratefully reads;
They show in their beauty and changes
How joy unto sorrow succeeds;
They chide us for yielding to sadness,
While Hope yet remains within reach,
And Religion may listen with gladness
To lessons that Nature can teach.

Believe, then, when darkness appals thee,
To-morrow thy sky may be light;
Still hope, e'en while sorrow enthrals thee,
To-morrow joy's sun may be bright;
For He who to Nature's wild features
Gives beauty where all appeared dim,
Will never do less for his creatures
Who patiently look up to Him!

TO SIR SAMUEL FLUDYER,

ON THE DEVASTATION EFFECTED ON HIS MARINE VILLA AT FELIXTOW, BY THE ENCROACHMENTS OF THE SEA.

"The Sea *versus* Land is a cause much contended,
And is oft brought to trial, but never is ended;
For, spite of the plaintiff, his foaming and pother,
What he gains on the one hand he loses on t'other.'

It may be thus, when thought can roam,
Yet poor the consolation
To those who trace, like thee, at home,
The marks of devastation.

Who see old Ocean's stormy pride
Enlarging still his border,
Threatening with each successive tide
More mischievous disorder.

Thy Eden it can ill repair,
Or disappointment sweeten,
To know thy ruthless foe elsewhere
By terra-firma beaten.

It may be joy to those who claim
Some acres from his clutches:
Their lot who play a losing game
No distant triumph touches.

What to the owner must remain,
When grief strikes mere beholders?
But useless sorrow to disdain,
And calmly shrug his shoulders.

Thou art but foiled by that strong foe,
The sternest in existence,
Who taught proud Xerxes long ago
How fruitless man's resistance.

From whom king Canute's royal word,
His courtiers' idle plaudits,
Alike with cold indifference heard,
Gained no respectful audits.

By such a general to be foiled,
Proves thee no bad tactician;
By such a conqueror to be spoiled,
No abject, low condition.

He must be more than man who seems
In such a strife victorious;
He must be less who rashly deems
Defeat like thine inglorious.

Never can that defeat efface
The grateful recollection
Of thy sweet spot, whose varied grace
Repaid each fond inspection.

Numbers have sought that fair domain,
And, should its beauties perish,
Remembrance shall its charms retain,
Their faded glory cherish.

E'en I, but once a loiterer there,
One lay could not refuse them;
And let these hasty lines declare
How loth I am to lose them.

SUMMER MUSINGS.

A cloudless sky once more is ours,
With all its depth of blue,
Bright as the tint of sapphire flowers
When bathed in morning dew;
And verdant leaves and blossoms fair
Live in the balmy summer air.

On hill, in valley, field and grove,
From thousand trembling sprays,
In notes of happiness and love
Blythe warblers pour their lays;
And glad bees round the flowrets hum
For joy that summer's reign is come.

But not the glorious azure sky,
Gay flowers, nor foliage green,
Nor happy songster's melody,
Which animates the scene,
Nor all I hear, nor all I see
Can bring life's summer back to me.

The mists of autumn gather round,
My leaf is wan and sere,
My spirit hears the hollow sound
Of wintry winds draw near;
Those winds which, while they loudest rave,
Portend the silence of the grave.

Yet sometimes, e'en amid the gloom
Of autumn's later days,
Some ling'ring flowers burst forth in bloom,
To greet its parting rays,
Like smiles that break through glistening tears,
Or cherish'd hopes through chilling fears.

Such the reflected lustre flung
By memory o'er my soul,
Borrow'd from hours when life was young,
And knew not grief's control;
When all without, whose charms might win,
Its brightest mirror found within.

And such, I fain would hope, the gleams
Which greet my mental eye,
Whose splendour far outshines the beams
Which gild the eastern sky;
Bright gleams of hope, whose heavenward ray
Leads on to faith's more perfect day.

While memory thus, in visions fond,
Can call back former years;
While Hope's meek glance can look beyond
This transient vale of tears,
THE PAST, THE FUTURE may atone
For all THE PRESENT can make known.

And e'en in autumn's pensive mood,
With winter's clouds in sight,
My quiet thoughts may calmly brood
O'er hours more blest and bright,
When heaven's unclouded spring may shine,
And more than summer's light be mine.

LINES

UNDER A DRAWING OF A WALL-FLOWER.

DELIGHTFUL flower, whose fair and fragrant bloom
Tinges with beauty many a mould'ring tower,
Lending a grace to its declining doom
Beyond the splendour of its proudest hour.

What art thou like? The cheerful smile of those
Whose eyes are dim with years, whose locks are grey:
The tranquil brightness of whose evening shows
They gave to God the morning of their day.

HYMN FOR EASTER.

THE Lord of life hath risen!
O'er death and hell hath triumph'd gloriously;
Hath burst the grave's dark prison,
And soared to light and immortality.

See! from the narrow tomb,
The stone, untouched by hands, is rolled away;
And from that spot of gloom
Hath broke the dawn of everlasting day.

Look in! and thou shalt see
No form of clay in funeral vestments bound;
By Him who died for thee,
The gloomy king of terrors is *un*-crowned!

Nothing of earth is there;
But bright and shining ones, in light arrayed,
Whose speech and aspect fair
Comfort the mourning, strengthen the dismayed.

"Why, in death's silent prison,
Seek ye the living where the dead should be?
He is not here, but risen,
And gone before you into Galilee!"

O Death! where is thy sting?
O Grave! where is thy boasted victory?
Our Captain, Lord, and King,
Hath conquered both, and triumphed gloriously.

And when He rose on high,
His might and mercy, in the gospel's plan,
Captured captivity,
And gave his spirit's heavenly gifts for man.

Thanks, then, and praise to God!
Honour and glory to the crucified!
Hope springs up from the sod;
We die, for Adam sinned; we live, for Christ hath died.

A VETERAN'S MEMORIAL;

OR VERSES ON THE FALL OF AN OLD TREE IN PLAYFORD CHURCH-YARD.

"And he who the ascending path-way scales,
By the gate above, and the mossy pales,
Will find the trunk of a leafless tree,
All bleak, and blighted, and bare;
Yet it keeps its station, and seems to be
Like a silent monitor there!"

From Playford, a descriptive Fragment.

Let loftier muses mourn the fall
Of heroes or of kings;
Enough for mine if she recall
More loved familiar things,—
Objects of retrospective thought,
With pure and peaceful visions fraught,
To which fond memory clings,
Because their unassuming worth
Outlives the form that gave them birth.

II.

E'en such wert thou, my favourite tree;
  Though leafless, scathed, and sere,
Once wont on this steep bank to be
  That grey tower's hoary peer;
The summer's heat, the winter's storm,
Each, with its venerable form,
  Had braved for many a year;
Yourselves the same in blooming spring,
And autumn's rich up-gathering.

III.

Whether from skies of cloudless blue
  The sun shone forth in pride,
Or the bright moon with silvery hue
  In softer splendours vied;
Whether the snow, or hoar-frost bright
With sparkling gems, or robe of white
  Your graceful garb supplied;
Yourselves unchangeably the same
Unvarying homage seemed to claim.

IV.

To me you were like links between
The living and the dead;
One grey with moss, the other green
With ivy's twining thread;
Unconscious each of sight or sound
As those whose forms reposed around,
Each in its earthy bed;
Yet both, in majesty serene,
The silent guardians of the scene.

V.

But Thou hast fallen! and in thy fall
A poet may deplore,
The loss of one memorial
Which time can ne'er restore:
Thy leafless boughs, and barkless stem,
So long that green bank's diadem,
Now greet my eye no more;
Nor can thy presence to my heart
Its treasured chronicles impart.

VI.

For Fancy, when on thee I gazed,
By her creative power,
Her visionary fabrics raised
Of many a long-past hour;
Simple and lowly, yet as bright
As are the rainbow's tints of light
In summer's softest shower,
Or chastened by that milder shade
Which served their purer spell to aid.

VII.

Since thou, that churchyard-gate beside,
First waved thy sapling bough,
Beneath thee many a blooming bride,
Fresh from the nuptial vow,
Hath passed with humble hopes elate!
And, slowly borne through that low gate,
What numbers, sleeping now
Beneath the green turf's flowery breast,
Have sought their quiet, dreamless rest.

VIII.

Under thy shadow, full of glee,
Have village children played;
And hoary age has seen in thee
Its own decline pourtrayed:
With human joys, griefs, hopes, and fears,
With humble smiles, and lowly tears,
Thy memory is arrayed;
And for their sakes, though reft and riven,
This record of thy fall is given.

SONNET

TO EDWARD ROMILLY, ESQ.

DEAR friend, what stimulus canst thou require,
Beyond the name thou bearest, to animate
Thy heart to choose the wise, the good, the great,
And after pure and virtuous fame aspire?
Nor friendship's voice, nor e'en the muses' lyre,
Stronger incentives could for thee create,
Than in thy thoughts and feelings must await
On the bright memory of thy honoured Sire.
Then be his patriot, philanthropic fame,
Ever before thee 'till life's course be run:
Nor need a prouder epitaph be won,
Even by him who boasts that noble name,
Than justly for his monument to claim,
" Here rests a virtuous father's virtuous son!"

SONNET

TO THE SAME.

I looked on thee, dear Edward, as a friend
Before I knew thee; for, long ere we met
I heard thy praise from one not wont to let
His judgment lightly censure or commend.
What marvel, then, some pensive thoughts should blend
With thy loved converse; or that fond regret,
To *his* lamented worth a sacred debt,
At times on brightest moment should attend?
Yet prize I not our social hours the less
Because this tempering cloud is o'er them spread;
Glimpses of glory through its veil are shed,
And gleams of beauty, which the heart may bless:
So pure and precious parted worth's impress!
So beautiful the memory of the dead!

ENIGMA.

'Come hearken my riddle, and read me my lay,
And tell me the name of the spell I pourtray.'"

Hast thou heard of Circe's * wand,
Which, in that enchantress' hand,
Doomed, by potent mystery,
Man to grovel in the sty?
Or of Prospero's,† at whose motion
Tempests roused the slumbering ocean,
Owned alike by mortal man,
Ariel, and Caliban?
Hast thou read of magic words?
Regal sceptres? Conquerors' swords?

* Vide Homer's Odyssey.

† Vide Shakspeare's Tempest.

And the wonders these can do?
I can work strange marvels too:
And, by my mysterious sway,
Scatter in one fatal day,
All that grandsire, sire, and son,
By long years of toil have won.

True it is my power, though strange
In *dispersing* cannot change;
But no talisman, or wand,
E'er, at Sorcery's command,
Wrought more magic transformation
In its *subjects'* rank and station.
Dost thou, reader, ask of me
Of what nature *these* may be?
Every thing that wealth can buy
Owns, in turn, my mastery:
All that nature can produce,
Or that art, with skilful use,
Forms and fashions; earth and air,
Fire and water; ships that bear

Freightage o'er the stormy seas,
Castles, cottages, and trees,
Books, and pictures;—what you please
Every thing, in short that man
E'er possessed, or ever can,
Every day,* if not each hour,
Is obedient to my power.

Fancy not my potent sway
Shuns the open eye of day;
Mine is no mysterious rite
Shrinking from the public sight;
On the contrary, when I
Deign my potent spell to try,
Views of profit, or of pride,
Spread the tidings far and wide;
Throngs are gathered; one and all
Mark my rise, and wait my fall;
For, like Sampson in his day,
Mightiest found in his decay,

* The Sabbath excepted; as in duty and decency bound.

At my most auspicious hour
In my fall is felt my power!

Of my substance, form, or size,
Dost thou ask? The muse replies
These are various—all and each;
In my name, and in the speech
Of him who sways me for the hour
Is enshrined my mystic power.

VERSES

SUGGESTED BY AN OLD ETCHING FROM REMBRANDT, OF CHRIST ASLEEP IN THE STORM.

Master, carest thou not that we perish?"
MARK iv. 38.

SUCH was the disciples' cry
When the crested waves beat high,
And the heavens above were dark
O'er the tempest-driven bark.

Such, O Lord! in trial's hour,
When afflictions round us lower,
Now, on life's tempestuous sea,
Our complaining cry to Thee.

But thou didst not, though upbraided,
Leave thy followers then unaided;
Prompt to succour, swift to save,
Thou rebukedst wind and wave.

At the word which spoke thy will,
Every stormy wind was still;
At thy voice the waves subsided,
And in gentlest murmurs glided.

Though their faith, too often frail,
In thy power divine might fail,
Though thou mightst reprove their fear,
Still thy saving arm was near.

Thus, O Lord! on us look down,
When above us clouds may frown;
Tossing on a stormy sea,
Helpless, hopeless, but for Thee.

Should we deem ourselves forgot,
Let thy mercies fail us not;
But in doubt's distrustful hour,
Magnify Thy love and power

SONNET

ON THE PYRAMID IN THE GROUNDS OF MAJOR MOOR, GREAT BEALINGS.

Old Cheops, or Cephrenes might erect,
On Egypt's plains, a loftier, prouder pile,
Of more ambitious and elaborate style,
To save his name and memory from neglect.
Thou, happier far than either architect,
Hast reared a humbler edifice the while,
Which neither captives' blood nor tears defile,
Nor thoughts of tyranny's stern yoke infect.
Hence in an English landscape thine but seems
An object with its beauties meet to blend;
The graceful birch beside it loves to bend:—
And if its crest* tri-une, in moonlight's beams,
Recall to fancy Hindu's wilder dreams,
These should not Christian charity offend.

* This "crest tri-une" was dug out of the ruins of a Hindoo temple at Malabar Point, on the island of Bombay. It is a model of the celebrated colossal bust in the cavern temple of Elephanta.

RECOLLECTIONS

OF MARTIN'S PRINT OF THE DELUGE.

The awful vision haunts me still!
In thoughts by day, in dreams by night;
So well had art's creative skill
There shown its fearless might.

The flood-gates of the foaming deep,
By power supreme asunder riven;
Heaven's opened windows,—and the sweep
Of clouds by tempests driven;—

The beetling crags which, on the right,
Menace swift ruin in their fall;
Yet rise on Memory's wistful sight,
And Memory's dreams appal.

The rocky foreground—where await
Man, beast, and bird, their fearful doom,
Wonder and awe, and love, and hate,
Mute grief, despair, and gloom,—

All passions of the human heart,
In moods the darkest, fiercest known,
Here, by the mastery of art,
In energy are shown.

All wildest fancy can pourtray
Of that tremendous scene and hour,
Exerts its own resistless sway,
And triumphs in its power.

It is no momentary spell,
  Unfelt, when we behold it not;
Its woes on after hours must dwell,
  Its fears be unforgot.

Yet not of woe or fear alone
  It tells a sad and solemn story;
One object in the wreck is shown,
  Of love, and grace, and glory.

One gleam, where all beside is dark,
  From stern and hopeless horror saves,
Shows where the heaven-protected ark
  The world of waters braves.

To that, amid Creation's doom,
  Meek Faith and holy Hope may cling;
And in destruction's darkest gloom,
  Of Mercy's triumph sing.

SONNET

TO CHARLOTTE M——.

" Thou art but in life's morning !"—Years have sped
Their silent flight since thus my idle rhyme
Addressed thee in thy being's opening prime ;
If since that hour some clouds at times have spread
Their shadow o'er thy path, these have not shed
On thee their anger ; but, from time to time,
Have led thy thoughts tow'rd sunnier heights to climb ;
Communing with the loved, lamented dead !
And still thou art but in the glowing morn
Of thy existence : hearts of finest mould,
And warm affections claim their right to hold
Those purer, nobler feelings with them born,
Which will not let them droop, of hope forlorn,
Nor in a few brief years be changed and cold.

THE MOTHER TO HER SICK CHILD.

THINE eye has not the laughing light
 That childhood's glance should know;
Thy cheek bears not the roses bright
 That childhood's cheek should show;
Thy step has not the buoyant glee
 Which seems with music fraught;—
But art thou, love! *less* dear to ME?
 How cruel were the thought!

Oh! none can tell, who have not known
 A nursing mother's lot,
The charm by patient meekness thrown
 Around the sufferer's cot;

The trust that still, through many fears,
The heart of love can buoy,
That those who seem to "*sow in tears,*"
Shall live to "*reap in joy!*"

That hope which knows no anxious fear
Has never been my own,
Love's smile, unchastened by its tear,
Has been to me unknown;
Yet many hopes and many smiles,
With thee, sweet child, were given,
Whose influence yet a heart beguiles,
That anguish else had riven.

Though April's sky with clouds be dark,
It has its spots of blue;
The sea that bears the storm-tost bark,
Has calm and sunshine too;
Though winter's blast nip leaf and flower,
It spares the root below;
And love in darkest days has power
To lighten care and woe.

Then blessings on thee, helpless one!
 If such thy lot must be;
In grief's dark shade, or joy's bright sun,
 Thou yet art dear to me:
For thee I'll watch, for thee I'll wake,
 For thee put up my prayer,
'Till every task for thy loved sake,
 The form of pleasure wear.

On Him who bears the feeble up,
 My spirit let me stay;
In Him who sweetens every cup,
 Confide from day to day;
His love in poverty is wealth,
 'Tis joy in sorrow's thrall;
In darkness, light,—in sickness, health,—
 In all things—" all in all!"

TO THE SWALLOW.

Aërial voyager, who spreadest thy wing
O'er trackless waves to seek a sunnier clime!
To man's immortal spirit thou shouldst bring
Thoughts of a lot more glorious and sublime.

Thou, when stern winter comes to strip our bowers,
Prompted by *instinct* only, takest thy flight
To distant lands, where fair and beauteous flowers,
Still but of earth—with splendour charm the sight;

But souls immortal, in the gathering gloom
Of death's dark winter, trust FAITH's guiding ray,
And soar where flowers of *amaranthine* bloom
Shine forth in sunless and eternal day.

"OH! HAD I THE WINGS OF A DOVE."

Oh! had I the wings of a dove!
How soon should they bear me above,
To those regions of light and of love,
  Beyond the dark grave's gloomy portal;
Where no sun-light illumines the day,
Those pinions should waft me away,
From this tenement, fashioned of clay,
  To a mansion of glory immortal.

Who has not, in anguish and care,
Often utterred in spirit this prayer,
When the dark clouds of doubt and despair
  Around him their shadows were casting?

Nor panted, in visions sublime,
From this cold world of sorrow to climb,
Exchanging the troubles of time
  For the transports of joy everlasting?

But not on our wishes may wait,
A transition so glorious and great:—
For the joys of that happier estate,
  Man must watch—'till the signal be given,
When the trumpet shall sound through the skies,
And spirits redeemed shall arise,
"Through the Lamb of the great sacrifice,"
  To sing praise and thanksgiving in heaven!

THE BANKS OF SWALE.

Art thou free-born nature's child?
Dost thou love her features wild,
More than all the grace which art
By her efforts can impart?
Turn thee from the busy crowd,
Contest fierce, and clamours loud,
And by moonlight, still and pale,
Wander on the banks of Swale.

Climb the steeps of Shunner's fell,
Towering o'er each darksome dell;
When, except the murmers hoarse,
Heard from Keld or Kisdon force,

Or the music, sweeter yet,
Of romantic Ivelet,
All is hushed ;—thou wilt not fail
Then to love the banks of Swale.

Or at morning musing there,
In the fresh and bracing air,
Ere the dew has left the flower,
Or the bird its leafy bower ;
See, unfolding to thy sight,
Giant Skiddaw's distant height,
While below the mist-wreaths veil,
Gracefully, the banks of Swale.

Lonely as they now may seem,
Time has been when, by its stream,
Converts from dark error's night,
To the gospel's glorious light,
There in gathered thousands stood ;
And, in its baptismal flood,
Bade a purer faith "all hail!"
On the rocky banks of Swale.

From such dim and distant day,
Turn thou not with scorn away:—
With it to that age were given
Peace on earth, and hope of heaven,
Light for darkness, joy for pain,
Liberty for thraldrom's chain,
Christian bliss for heathen bale,
By the quiet banks of Swale.

The Swale is memorable not only for the romantic scenery of the dale to which it gives its name, but for having had ten thousand persons baptized in it at one time on the introduction of Christianity into this country.

TO A CHILD.

ON THE APPROACH OF WINTER.

Mourn not, my little maid,
That the flowers of spring are sere;
Or that summer leaves should fade
In the autumn of the year.

Those flowers have had their day;
The green leaves their task had done,
When they screened us from the ray
Of the bright and scorching sun.

The blossoms fed the bee;
And the leaves their shelter flung
Where, in shady bush or tree,
The birds brought up their young;

But what have thou and I
  Done since April's teeming showers?
Or what fruits can we supply
  From past summer's long light hours?

Nor let it chill thy heart
  That stern winter now is near,
It has pleasures to impart
  Which to childhood should be dear.

Its brightly blazing hearth,
  And the smiling faces round it,
With as high and pure a worth
  And as sweet a charm have crowned it.

Yet, little maid, remember,
  That the prudent ant and bee,
Provide for dark December,
  While the year is in its glee.

TO MY DAUGHTER.

WHILE ON A VISIT AT

THOUGH lonely seems *our* home the while,
I am content that *thou* shouldst stray
'Mid scenes whose memory can beguile
My thoughts when thou art far away;
Nor will I chide thy lengthened stay,
If thou wilt bring back to thy sire,
The glow of heart, the spirit's play,
Those scenes could once inspire.

But this, my love, can never be;
And such a dream I could forego,
If what those haunts have yielded me,
Their influence may on thee bestow:

More grateful still it were to know,
While thus afar 'tis thine to roam,
With what awakens pleasure's glow,
May blend fond thoughts of home.

The ivy on our garden wall,
On which I gaze;—in many an hour
To me can silently recall
The wreaths which deck your old church-tower:
May those in thee with magic power,
Such feelings and such thoughts awake;
And many a tree and many a flower,
The same fond spell partake.

Oh! be it thus; then though thou art
A truant still from home and me,
These links shall bind us to thy heart,
And loved memorials ever be;
Nor shall thine eye an object see,
Though fair the scenes where thou mayst roam,
Which boasts a sweeter charm for thee,
Than wakening thoughts of home.

SONNET

TO A NAMELESS FRIEND.

In each successive tome that bears *my* name
Hast thou, though veiled *thy own* from public eyes,
Won from my muse that willing sacrifice
Which worth and talents such as thine should claim:
And I should close my minstrel task with shame,
Could I forget the indissoluble ties
Which every grateful thought of thee supplies
To one who deems thy friendship more than fame.
Accept then, thus imperfectly, once more,
The homage of thy poet and thy friend;
And should thy partial praise my lays commend,
Versed as thou art in all the gentle lore
Of English poesy's exhaustless store,
Whom I most love they never can offend

CHRIST WALKING ON THE SEA

VERSES ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE FRONTISPIECE, DRAWN AND ENGRAVED BY JOHN MARTIN.

I.

THE multitudes, miraculously fed,
Had to their distant homes been sent away;
Jesus had sought, apart, the mountain-head,
'Mid nature's silent solitude to pray:
In darkness and in storm had closed the day,
And on the water of Gennesaret
The bark which held his faithful followers, lay
Tossed to and fro;—their Master comes not yet!
Can he who fed the crowd, his chosen few forget?

II.

Believe it not:—though heaven above be dark,
And ocean stormy, still his love and might
Are with the inmates of that little bark;
And, in the fourth watch of the fearful night,
A heavenly form arrayed in vestments bright,
Treads with unfaltering feet the billowy tide:
The moon has risen, and sheds her silvery light
Full on that form which toward them seems to glide,
As if the winds to chain, and all their fears to chide.

III.

Can it be human? One of mortal mould
Could walk not thus the waves in majesty!
Fear strikes the timid, awe o'ercomes the bold,
As, underneath that shadowy moon-lit sky,
The glorious vision silently draws nigh,
Shining more brightly from surrounding shade;
"It is a spirit!" in their fear they cry:—
Soon does their Master's voice those fears upbraid,
"Be of good cheer," he says, "'Tis I, be not afraid!"

IV.

Peter goes forth to meet him: but the sound
E'en of the sinking tempest's lingering breath,
The clouds of night yet darkly hovering round,
The parting waves, his only path beneath,
Recall to him but images of death,
And fear had sank him —but with out-stretched hand,
His Lord exclaims, "O thou of little faith!
Why didst thou doubt?" his hope and faith expand,
And by his Master's side he walks as on dry land

V

Oh! well might they before whose eyes were trod
The deep's unyielding waves, then worship Thee;
Confess Thee of a truth the Son of God,
And bend in prayer and praise the reverend knee
Should their's, alone, such rites of homage be?
Forbid the thought! unseen of mortal eye
Even in this day, on life's tempestuous sea,
Thou walk'st its waves when stormy winds are high,
Thy people's guide and guard: nor wilt thou pass them by!

VI.

As to thy loved disciples in their bark
Thou showedst Thyself upon that fearful night,
E'en now when waves are rough, and skies are dark,
Dost thou, in condescending love, delight
To manifest thy saving arm of might
For such as look to thee alone for aid;
To those who walk by faith and not by sight
Yet visible in sorrow's dreariest shade,
And heard proclaiming still, "'Tis I, be not afraid!"

VII.

Then wind and wave are hushed, and all is calm;
Light from above breaks forth, the clouds are riven,
And for the cry of fear, the grateful psalm
Of joy and praise is to the spirit given:
No more the bark is tempest-tossed or driven,
But, as in this delightful, tranquil scene,
The parting clouds ope vistas into heaven;
For fear and doubt spring faith and hope serene,
And holy peace presides where horror late hath been.

VIII.

Saviour, Redeemer, and Incarnate Word!
  Since Scripture hath declared that every knee
To Thee shall bow, each tongue confess Thee "Lord"
  In mercy or in judgment; grant that we
May in the hour of mercy bow to Thee!
  If not—in judgment, gracious Lord! arise;
And on the wave of trial's stormiest sea,
  Beneath the gloom of sorrow's darkest skies,
Come as thou camest of yore to Thy disciples' eyes.

THE END.

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